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THE NEW

STATESMAN AND NATION

The Week-end Review

No. XXIV. No. 616. [Incorporating THE ATHENÆUM] SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1942 [Registered at the G.P.O. as a newspaper] SIXPENCE

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THE COST OF ADMIRAL DARLAN

No doubt Mr. Roosevelt will soon have more to say about his policy towards Admiral Darlan. The Admiral's own intentions are plain enough: he is bent on using the Allies to make himself dictator of North Africa, and perhaps, if opportunity presents itself, of France. He would be a good neighbour for Franco who has again reminded us of what the war is about by declaring his affection for the New Order of the Axis and his undying contempt for the tradition of European civilisation which he calls Liberalism. Darlan is staking out a claim to imitate Franco; he will, if he can, invade France in order to maintain the Vichy-Fascist dictatorship after the Allies have driven out the Germans. He is consolidating his position in North Africa and preparing to back his claim to impose Fascism on France by raising a large army under Vichy-Fascist leadership. If the Allies do not succeed in driving out the Germans he remains, of course, in an excellent position for changing sides once again.

General Eisenhower's motives are, as we know, purely military, and General Boisson's apparently reluctant agreement to open the facilities of Dakar to Allied ships and airplanes diminishes one of the most serious causes of suspicion that Darlan had sold him a pig in a poke. But many awkward questions remain. Why, for instance, is Fighting French Admiral Muselier, who actually built the fortifications of Bizerta, not being consulted as to the best way of attacking them? Is the war being prolonged, and British and American lives being wasted by the political objections of the Fascist Darlan? What guarantee is there that the Fascist-led army (300,000 is the figure mentioned in the press) which the Allies are to help Darlan to raise and equip, will not be used as a permanent threat to stab us in the back at any moment, between now and the end of the war, that we fail to let Darlan do what he wants? General Catroux spoke the obvious truth when he said that, "considering Darlan's past, we must consider whether his presence in the very centre of communications for an army of Tunisia is compatible with their security." Is not the "temporary military necessity" to treat with Darlan becoming a permanent political necessity to yield to Darlan's blackmail on pain of having a supplementary war on our hands? Instead of our double-crossing Darlan, which is said to be the intention of our policy, may not that astute and seasoned traitor double-cross the Allies? As a double-crosser he has had more practice than President Roosevelt.

For comfort we must look presumably to statements on Allied policy laid down by President Roosevelt and Mr. Cordell Hull. The former has said in effect that Admiral Darlan's position is temporary and local, that the Admiral is unsuitable as an ally, and that he will not be allowed to share in determining the future of France. He is a temporary Commissioner, but one who daily increases his hold and becomes more difficult to dislodge. Mr. Cordell Hull has said that the U.S.A. are too busy driving the Axis out of North Africa to have time to spare for political problems. (As a result Darlan is presenting him with the political problem of our building up French Fascism in Africa with one hand while driving out Axis Fascism with the other.) Mr. Hull added that when the Allies win the war "the peoples in the countries now occupied would be enabled themselves to choose the leaders and Governments they wished without outside interference."

Mr. Hull is not a cynic. He must therefore mean that our victory will not subject the French people to a Fascist occupation engineered by Darlan, and will allow them to choose the leaders and Governments they wish without "inside" interference from a Fascist army (including Zouaves, Moors and Senegalese) introduced into France from North Africa.

"An important American official" in Washington is quoted in the press, however, as suggesting that "the existing régime in North Africa might continue until the end of the war, and the temporary military arrangement for a like period. . . . We did not set up a government, but dealt with a *de facto* government. By so doing I suppose we may be said to have recognised the government who have been recognised by General Giraud and by the Governors of Morocco and French West Africa. Darlan's status has improved with the occupation of all France. The act put Pétain officially outside the picture, and his mantle fell on Darlan, who rules in his name in North Africa." That is practically a policy of collusion with Darlan, and certainly inconsistent with Roosevelt's and Hull's statements.

General Eisenhower, in a fulsome congratulatory message, refers to Admiral Darlan as a Frenchman "worthy of his country's great past," describes the issue of Fascism *v.* Democracy that divided Darlan from the French patriots whom he has betrayed and handed over as hostages to his Nazi patrons to be shot, as "small differences of ideas" already forgotten. He even declares that Darlan and Co.'s "decision and courage . . . will make France great again and will eject the German invader." That virtually endorses all Darlan's claim and seems to promise support for his invasion of France.

Meanwhile, Darlan refuses to liberate most of his political prisoners, controls the radio throughout French North Africa (apparently by agreement), censors the press (including suppressing President Roosevelt's unflattering reference to himself and passages from Mr. Churchill's broadcast), and treats with the Allies in all respects on the assumption that he is the representative of French sovereignty and of the Marshal, and is the dictator of North Africa.

Who is boss in North Africa—Darlan or the Allies? What is allied policy—is it President Roosevelt's or that of the anonymous State Department (?) official in Washington, or General Eisenhower's? And where does Britain come in? Do not the British constitute an interested party, and, if so, should not British views and British policy be asserted publicly, with an emphatic claim that we and the Soviet Union should share in the big decisions that are being taken, before the situation gets wholly out of hand? These questions need answering. We know well enough that in the confused situation of Europe to-day many compromises and many strange alliances are inevitable. We are no innocents expecting a clean cause and a clear issue. But there are limits to the confusions that the public can endure. Our soldiers and airmen did not die in the battle

of Britain, we did not hold on proudly and alone through the bombing of 1940–1 so that we might send our soldiers in 1942 to establish Fascism in the name of military necessity. Mr. Roosevelt should explain this to his generals, if the point has not yet reached them. This is not a war for Fascism which, from a military point of view, might be easier to fight, but a war against Fascism. We in England settled it that way.

From Bizerta to Stalingrad

The brilliant opening of our new campaigns in Africa may have encouraged excessive hopes in many minds. The Eighth Army is confronted at El Agheila with a defensive position as strong as that which it held itself at El Alamein and very similar to it. It can be taken only by frontal assault, and our army is now under the disadvantage which Rommel recently experienced: it has to depend on excessively long communications. There has been a long pause, but presumably General Montgomery will soon be ready for an attack which must be costly and may be difficult.

In Tunisia our generalship has not been as good as the work of organisation and transport which carried the Allied Forces to North Africa. Two courses were possible in attacking Bizerta and Tunis. Success might have followed a rapid onslaught even with small numbers, if it had been made before the Germans could bring in any considerable force by air and sea. The other sound plan would have been to delay the attack until we had a decided superiority. The Allies adopted neither of these courses. There was a good deal of delay, but the First Army, when it did strike, was not in sufficient force, and was decidedly inferior in the air. The result has been a check which may be rather more unpleasant than the meagre official telegrams describe. We assume, however, that reinforcements both on the ground and in the air are now available.

On the Russian fronts events are inevitably moving more slowly. Heavy snow has fallen; on the whole an advantage to the well-equipped Red Army. In the centre round Rzhev the fighting is still indecisive and very costly to both sides, but it serves to keep the enemy occupied, while the more promising operations proceed round Stalingrad. There a great German army is still encircled within an extensive quadrilateral between Don and Volga. It has to be supplied largely by air, and the Russians are wearing it down by detailed attacks against its strongly fortified positions, both in Stalingrad itself and in the open country. Hints from Moscow suggest that the Germans now have ready, perhaps in the south, a relieving column which will attempt to break through. Conceivably, following their usual tactics, the Russians may let it enter the bag and then close round it.

The American Party Game

During the next two years politics in America will be a series of manœuvres based on the presidential election in 1944. Congress, with its narrow balance of parties, will be trying all the time, in home politics at least, to thwart and discredit the President. Inside the two main parties a struggle for power will go on to decide what type of candidate each shall choose for this distant contest. What has just happened inside the Republican machine may offer us some guide to the relative strength of the two competing factions. A new chairman had to be chosen for the National Committee of this party. The progressives who look on Mr. Wendell Willkie as their leader put up a man of their own, and so did the conservative ex-isolationists who follow Governor Dewey and Senator Taft. They tied, with the result that the choice fell in the end on a relatively neutral and inconspicuous personality, Mr. Spangler of Iowa. An isolationist he is not, though he used to oppose the League, but he is a stout opponent of the New Deal, who has been "after that animal since 1932." On this indication may we expect as Republican presidential candidate some rather dull but mildly internationalist conservative? In that case the proper Democratic answer would be to choose a man of the type of Vice-President Wallace. But much can happen in two years.

Crooked Blessing

The Beveridge Report has had a very good press, but this must by no means be taken as implying that the scheme will go through more or less as it stands. Its opponents will not oppose it—they dare not—but they will do their level best to chop bits off of it, and to alter its character by carefully devised amendments. The Beveridge "outpost" on which the largest single attack is likely to be concentrated is the proposal to convert the Industrial Life Offices, shorn of their functions in relation to funeral benefit, into a public service, run by an Industrial Assistance Board. It will be hoped that, if this proposal can be defeated, the Life Offices may be able to advance further to the attack, in an attempt to retain their funeral benefit activities and even, perhaps, their position as Approved Societies for Health Insurance. On all these issues, it is of the greatest importance to prevent any whittling down of the Report. It is entirely against the public interest that either profit-making companies or collecting societies practically owned by their agents shall be allowed to carry on with the grossly wasteful business of competitive house-to-house collection of premiums for industrial insurance. If house to house collection is to continue, it shall be organised under a Public Corporation; and in respect of ordinary funeral benefit it clearly should not continue at all. The propagandists for the Report will have to keep continually in mind the extraordinary ignorance of most people about their rights and wrongs under the present system. There will be many silver-tongued agents who will tell them that all is well; and it will take a really big and well-organised campaign of explanation to get the essential facts into their heads.

Snail's Pace

How much farther are we with reconstruction now that Sir William Jowitt has surveyed the field? Alas, not much. It is to be observed that the question of the Beveridge Report, presumably because it is regarded as too important for Sir William Jowitt's inter-ministerial committee to be allowed to meddle with it, has been referred to a committee under Sir John Anderson, who can be relied on not to commit the Government to anything the Tories are not ready to accept. In the planning field, it has been made clear that the new Ministry of Planning is to be a Ministry of town and country planning—of land-use planning—and nothing more. If this were not clear on other grounds, it would be so on the ground that its powers are not to extend to Scotland, which, for town and country planning purposes, is to remain under the Scottish Office. This plainly precludes the new Ministry from playing any part in economic planning; for Great Britain must be treated as a whole for major decisions on economic policy. Economic planning, therefore, presumably remains with the Board of Trade, as far as it is anywhere at all. Moreover, even in the field of land-use planning, there is still no decision of any sort about the proposals of the Uthwatt Report. There is to be a Commission, under the new Ministry; but nobody knows what the Commission is to do. Yet, unless global purchase of development rights is accepted, practically the whole of the Uthwatt structure falls to the ground, and the Commission will be left with nothing to do, and no reason for existing. For the rest, in last week's reconstruction jamboree, Mr. Eden made another of his hopeful, pleasantly progressive speeches which commit nobody; and the Government can now presumably hope that for a time the main body of the public will forget all post-war issues, except Social Security—so that if it makes friendly noises about the Beveridge Report its numerous sins of omission will almost cease to be noticed.

Women's Wages

The new agreement about women's wages in the war trades is a step forward, not only because it lays down a more tolerable national minimum wage—50s. for a 47-hour week—but also because it introduces the principle of grading women's work as such, and not merely work on which women are directly replacing men. It is true that the 50s. minimum will not be payable until the worker is 21, and that for those between 21 and 18, and under 18, there are merely increased bonuses without a standard rate. But under present conditions this does not greatly matter, though it would be a fruitful cause of trouble if such an anomaly were to continue after the war. The provisions for grading affect the A.E.U. and other unions besides the two which have negotiated the new agreement—the Transport and General Workers' Union and the General and Municipal Workers. There will, accordingly, have to be further discussions before the grading scheme can be brought into force, and these may be complicated by inter-union rivalries and differences. There is, however, plainly everything to be said for grading women's work as such, and for allowing higher rates for more skilled or responsible work, whether or not the women in question are regarded as replacing men. It has taken many, many months to reach this agreement, and more than once what has appeared to be a complete deadlock has been reached. The Minister of Labour, himself Secretary of one of the Unions concerned, is said to have been largely responsible in the end for pushing the agreement through. Of course, the 50s. minimum *is* a minimum. Most of the women concerned are on piecework, and will be in a position to earn more.

Luton at Millbank

The battle over Luton's hat trade has died down for the moment. Mr. Dalton has said that the Board of Trade never intended to shut the trade down, or move it bodily elsewhere, but that there must be considerable further curtailment in order to release labour for munitions, and that arrangements may have to be made for carrying on some additional production elsewhere. How far this will calm Luton's fears we are not quite sure. It goes some way to meet the claim that workers who are too old to be transferred or otherwise unsuitable for war work be allowed to continue in their present occupation, but it will hardly dispel Luton's fears that new competitors may be built up against it in other parts of the country. The Lutonians will, however, perhaps now be persuaded to believe that there was in truth no sinister conspiracy on the part of the Board of Trade to steal their industry away and settle it permanently in one of the depressed areas. This fear was undoubtedly very prevalent in the town until Mr. Dalton spoke to the deputation; and it is to be hoped that its baselessness will now be realised. At the same time, it is only fair to say that recent speeches by Mr. Lyttelton and others have strongly suggested that there is an official policy of shutting down altogether in certain areas near war industries which have hitherto been localised in them, and transferring them lock, stock and barrel elsewhere. This policy will only work in cases where it is a question of shutting down a single big factory and turning it over to war production; it will be impracticable wherever a local industry includes a number of small establishments, each already left to rely mainly on its older workers, or even on retired workers who have come back during the war. In such cases the main result is to reduce total production by driving elderly people back into retirement.

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NEW STATESMAN AND NATION,
10 Gt. Turnstile, London, W.C.1. *Hol.* 3216.

WHO WOULD BE VICEROY?

By next April a new Viceroy ought to be entering on his reign at New Delhi. Already, in a tour through the Punjab and the North-West Frontier, Lord Linlithgow has made his speeches of farewell to India. But the hour of his release is not yet in sight: he will have to linger for a further six months at least. No one, if we may trust a newspaper which is usually careful in its handling of facts, is brave enough to shoulder a responsibility which this conscientious Scottish nobleman has borne for nearly seven years. This case must be unique in history. Even in the days of the Company this was an appointment, though it bore a less magnificent title, which the greatest aristocrats coveted. A Cornwallis, a Bentinck, a Dufferin, a Ripon, a Lytton, and, above all, a Curzon—to what rank more gorgeous, what higher seat of power could any of them aspire, unless it were the post of the King's First Minister? There have certainly been dull Viceroys, and inadequate Viceroys, but none of them had quite succeeded in destroying the prestige of this great office, whose tenant rules over four hundred millions of his fellow-men. And now the appointment goes a-begging. Lord Cranborne, it is said, lacks the robust health which the post demands—to our regret, for he has a personality Indians would have respected. Mr. Attlee and Lord Halifax (for a second term) are both reported to have been solicited in vain. Is it a robust conscience they lack? Finally, the offer went to Sir Archibald Sinclair, who considered it, but finally refused it.

Precisely why? We do not profess to know. But we can imagine some aspects of this appointment which might have attracted the leader of the Liberal Party. The next Viceroy, if all goes well, should be the last. To him, if Indians ever accept the long-range proposals of the Cripps offer, will fall the delicate but splendid task of presiding over the act of India's self-determination. A little more than a century ago the greatest of the Whig historians, whose name will always stand out conspicuous in the records of the Indian empire, anticipated this moment and envied the chance Sir Archibald Sinclair has rejected. In his speech, when he introduced the Bill for the Government of India in 1833, Macaulay foresaw the day when

> our subjects . . . having become instructed in European knowledge, may in some future age demand European institutions. Whether such a day will ever come I know not. But never will I attempt to avert or to retard it. Whenever it comes it will be the proudest day in English history.

Within five years the war must be over, and "the proudest day" should have arrived. "Our subjects" have been demanding "European institutions" for rather more than half a century. Statesmen less liberal than Macaulay have done a good deal of "retarding." But to avert the culmination of our hopes is no longer possible. Why, then, should the heir to the Whig tradition refuse the glory of completing the work of destiny?

It would be an impertinence to guess the reasons that may have led to Sir Archibald's refusal. But we can imagine some reasons which might weigh with the typical Liberal we take him to be. Before he could hope to confer "European institutions" on India, some sterner tasks would await him. He might have to sanction the use of the 'planes he sent out to India, not to fight the Japanese, but to spray Indian crowds with their machine-guns. He might have to look on while his police charged processions of schoolgirls with their canes. It might disturb his tranquillity to reflect that in the crowded prisons under his charge his warders were flogging university students, which was hardly the treatment Macaulay foresaw for subjects "instructed in European knowledge." There are now some death-warrants to be signed for the more reckless of Mr. Gandhi's followers, a task he might find distasteful. He might conceivably blush if he should be reminded that (as we reported last week) three young girls are each suffering two months of "rigorous imprisonment" for writing Congress slogans in the sand. There are, to be sure, subordinate magistrates who are there to relieve him from the odium of passing such sentences. Viceroys are not expected with their own hands to flog students or to fire on crowds: it would be a better world if they were. But it might cross his mind from time to time that all these things could be done only in his name and by his authority. On any sound reading of the Indian Constitution it is the Governor-General-in-Council who flogs. Finally, he would have to play turnkey to the Mahatma and Pandit Nehru, a vicarious activity for which he may feel no strong inclination. It is commonly supposed that Viceroys spend their time shooting tigers from the backs of elephants. That is a vulgar error. What they have to do, among the incidentals of their dull routine, is to chain up saints and imprison thinkers.

But let us suppose that Sir Archibald is of coarser grain than we take him to be. He might comfort himself by recalling that these measures, unpleasant though they are, are mild in comparison with oppression under other existing Empires. In any case, these distasteful jobs cannot last for ever. Eventually, over a sullen land, too weary to prolong its rebellion, will dawn "the proudest day in English history." Our Liberal Viceroy might then proceed to confer those "European institutions" in accordance with the Cripps formula. Here Sir Archibald, if he is the shrewd observer of men and life we take him to be, might feel the need for caution. Macaulay could swear that he would never avert the proudest day. But he, after all, was never tempted. It lay, as he foresaw, in "some future age." But, now that it has arrived, it may be less easy to welcome it than it seemed a century in advance of the appointed date. So we should judge from Mr. Churchill's speech at the Guildhall:

> We mean to hold our own. I have not become the King's first Minister in order to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire.

There is a refreshing, indeed a truculent frankness in this utterance. Mr. Churchill is an Imperialist and does not care who knows it. He dislikes the prudish name "Commonwealth," and means to stick to "Empire." For him it is our property, "our own," and neither Nazis nor Americans will induce him to let go. As for India, he has always regarded it as an enormous Blenheim Park entailed to him and his class for ever. The only puzzle is to account for his consent to the Cripps Mission, and his subsequent statement (as gruff and curt as possible) that the offer still held good. He publicly sanctioned the original offer three days after the fall of Rangoon. We do not suggest that even then his own confidence in victory flagged, but he may have found it more difficult than usual to impart it to his colleagues and allies. The perfunctory renewal was made in a speech which carried the tactics of *Divide et Impera* to the verge of caricature. With less than this degree of encouragement, Mr. Churchill may have reckoned, the Princes and Mr. Jinnah between them may be trusted to render the process of self-determination unworkable. Shorn of its Muslim provinces, an amputated Hindustan, sore and angry, could still survive. But if the Princes, taking their cue from Mr. Churchill, should decide to stay outside the future Indian Union, it might just be capable of life, but certainly not of independence. For their States, often in dislocated fragments, are scattered round all the provinces and even inside them. They cut the railways, interrupt the electric grid, and sprawl across the trunk roads. If Mr. Churchill glanced at the map before he sanctioned the Cripps offer, he may have realised that the risk he took was negligible.

One day, however, the Viceroy's office will have to be filled. Lord Linlithgow is not immortal. If no Englishman will take it, we may have to fall back on some Indian "instructed in European knowledge." Our own choice would light without hesitation on Mr. Jinnah. For five years at least, if he sat in the Viceregal Lodge, the case for cutting India in two might seem to him less urgent than it does to-day.

BRITAIN AND AMERICA.—I

Surveying the unrationed cornucopia of Fifth Avenue, I said to myself, somewhat breathlessly (for the transition from Europe is sudden): "Nobody in this country could really feel that they were in the war that I have just left, let alone imagine for a moment that they might lose it. They couldn't lose it, of course, in the way the British could lose it; neither Germans nor Japanese have a chance of marching on their flat feet into Washington. But Americans could lose the war by internal differences and by failing to realise that a war does not end when the military danger is past."

In 1942 the United States occupies a position similar to Britain's in the nineteenth century. Technically, the Atlantic has dwindled into the equivalent of the English Channel, while the English Channel has become nothing more than a remarkably efficient tank trap. Presumably the psychology of the two nations will adjust itself accordingly. A European coming to America may feel something of the irritation that a Pole or Italian, fighting for national liberty a hundred years ago, used to feel when he escaped to Palmerston's England. Just as England used to decide on the highest moral principles whether or not it was involved in a European dispute and was apt, to the foreigner's irritation, to find these principles coincident with the interests of Great Britain, so to-day the United States can preach very high-minded sermons from bomb-proof pulpits between the Pacific and Atlantic oceans. The British, on the other hand, can no longer afford so much morality or so much muddle. What was meant by "muddling through"? Nothing but that we had more money and more ships and a safer position than other people; we could still win wars after making mistakes that would have been the ruin of a Continental nation. To-day Britain is part of the Continent and its fate is bound up with that of the other Continental peoples. Instead of muddling through, we British will have to abandon the boast that we live by instinct and not by intellect; we shall have to use our brains like any other threatened people. This means that one of the main reasons for British unpopularity in the world may disappear. We shall cease to be so aggravatingly superior. The mantle of our superiority will fall on to American shoulders.

The Englishman who arrives in America to-day does well to realise that America is a foreign country. He easily takes for granted a blood relationship which only in small part represents the reality. Any Englishman who travels across the country, who talks and mixes with Americans outside hotels and official quarters, quickly discovers a more nationally conscious America than there has ever been in the past, composed of a combination of nationalities of which Britain is only one constituent. Then he may learn to see in the malicious columns of the *Chicago Tribune* not so much a pathological hatred of Britain—though that is there—as a dangerous repudiation by a small section of Americans of the principles on which the United States was founded. He will see the struggle here as part of the same struggle in which Europe is engaged, the struggle of the common people to share in the rights and privileges of civilised society. They are threatened in the United States just as they are threatened in Europe. Once he understands this he may find a more valid standard of judgment and cease only to ask whether this person or that article is or is not "pro-British."

Friction between the two nations arises in

many ways. Psychologists and historians could fill big books with theories about its origin. The British have been incurably ignorant and supercilious about the United States; the Americans, resentful and misinformed about Britain. If the British know that America has had a history, they have learnt it through the eccentric medium of the historical film. On the other hand, American historical textbooks comically misrepresent the eighteenth-century story of British blundering, and the British have been too self-satisfied to worry whether Americans distorted the story or not. British writers and critics have increased American irritation ever since the days of Mrs. Trollope and Dickens. Again, there is always confusion about language. America is not a child of Britain, but a parallel society which has sprung from European stock. Similarly, American is not a debased form of the English language any more than the British language is a high-falutin' form of American. They are two parallel branches of speech that have developed from a common seventeenth-century stem. To-day irritations that spring from a common but divergent inheritance have a new importance. Small in themselves, they perpetuate an unnecessary friction and give a handle to people who, for interested reasons, wish to keep the United Nations disunited. The "inferiority" which used to make Americans alternately flattering and aggressive towards the British is gone: the imitation of British mediæval architecture, which some Americans once thought necessary if the moss of culture was to flourish on American soil, is gone along with the boasts that everything in the United States is the biggest in the world. Americans have learned much in the last twenty years. The lesson of the slump has been understood by more people in America than in Britain. America is big and conscious of its strength. Obviously the real difficulties to-day spring from the underlying question of power. During the war we try to hide from ourselves and each other that capitalist rivalry tends not to disappear but to increase. Beneath the surface British business fears the inevitable expansion of American power, while Americans, either from jealousy or from liberalism, resent the tenacity of British imperialism.

Almost all Americans, nurtured in this socially egalitarian atmosphere, dislike something which they particularly identify with Britain. They say the British look down their noses; they say we are class-ridden. You only excite incredulity if, in repudiating a feudal picture of England, you mention, incidentally, that the most advanced sentiments are often expressed by the handful of peers who are the effective members of the House of Lords. Many Americans do not know the difference between the Commonwealth and the Empire. I have met some who are convinced that you are lying when you tell them that Canada, Australia, and South Africa are not subject States. They blandly ask you why Canada pays taxes to Britain, and the retort that, on the contrary, Britain pays Canada for all it buys and that British purchases from India are wiping out India's public debt just leaves them sceptical. But it is not this misinformation, which is after all no more aggravating to an Englishman than British ignorance of any American figures except George Washington and Abraham Lincoln is to Americans, that I am now worrying about. My point is that much of this criticism of Britain has nothing to do with facts; it is dislike of a picture of the English ruling-class man, who is seen as out of date, effete, useless, and yet somehow all-powerful and always successful in outwitting the simple-minded American in spite of the fact that America is now the most powerful, intelligent, moral and magnificently efficient country in the world.

Whenever I ask about English speakers and visitors to the United States I am told the same thing. Americans like direct, extrovert Englishmen and do not often meet them. They like English people who can laugh at themselves and they find to their surprise that it is the British these days who have become "touchy" and humourless. They like ordinary people who say in America what they would say at home and who seem to enjoy life in the United States. "You see," said an American of a visiting Englishman, "*he seems to like Americans!*" Herbert Hodge, the taxi driver who wrote *It is Draughty in Front*, is the sort of person who many Americans feared did not exist in England. "Why," they say, "after all, the English people really must be quite like Americans."

In the same way a well-known trade unionist in the United States asked me why we did not more often send to this country trade unionists like the members of his own union. "We get the impression," he said—this conversation took place before the visit of Jack Tanner and others to the United States—"that the British trade unionists are like Sir Walter Citrine." A title of any sort is a serious barrier to successful contact with American labour, indeed, with the whole American public. And by the same token I have heard people say that it was refreshing to meet Englishmen who did not turn out to agree with Winston Churchill about India. Only a critic of British imperialism can successfully discuss that subject in America. One man made himself popular merely by making a joke about the British Empire—a subject which his audience feared that all the English regarded as sacred. I even found some Americans prepared to discuss the negro problem, once I admitted the imperfections of Britain. There is much ignorance in America about the British war effort and the British cause and British society, but if this ignorance is to be remedied British spokesmen must be prepared to admit dissatisfaction with many things in Britain and its record; their aspirations for change will guarantee them a welcome to the ordinary American public.

But is England changing? Americans constantly ask. Official Britain answers unconvincingly and sometimes disingenuously. Official Britain is far too impressed by the seeming importance of the wealthy and prominent people who are terrified of socialism. Official Britain, indeed, gets all hot and bothered by this question. Apparently Americans want Britain to change, but if we say that under the strain of war and the influence of bombing we are making important social strides, we are at once accused of the terrible crime of Socialism. We mustn't be feudal; we must move very rapidly, apparently to the Left, and yet under no circumstances must we become in the least Red. This is a difficult pattern to which to conform. (If any key could fit the lock, has not Sir William Beveridge found it?) In general the British would do much better in America if they worried much less about what Important People thought and bluntly refused to appease those who are in any case dubious friends of Britain and not by any means certainly the future rulers of the United States. The type of Englishman who is disliked by most Americans represents only a small proportion of British people, and the blunt truth is that this type is now unpopular in most parts of the world, including Britain itself. A Welshman, who knows America intimately, remarked to me the other day that the official spokesmen of England, the men who manage to appear to govern it, really come from a very small group and live in a very restricted area. "There is," he remarked, "a section around Oxford and Cambridge and in London and the home counties which arrogates for itself the title of British and which I and all my friends from Scotland, Wales, and the provinces of Britain dislike just as much as the average American dislikes it."

In a word, the friction between America and Britain is aggravated by trivialities that spring from history and tradition, but the real conflict is exactly that which now divides the whole world. It is not a simple conflict; it is at once a struggle between established ruling classes and a struggle against them by common people in each country. There are leaders of opinion who realise this in both political camps in the United States to-day. I shall attempt some analysis of the political situation in another article.

KINGSLEY MARTIN

YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED

[FROM A DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT]

THERE are disquieting resemblances between Anglo-American support of Admiral Kolchak in 1918–1920 and the support of Admiral Darlan to-day. Admiral Kolchak became the supreme leader of the White Russian forces in North and South Russia and Siberia, supported by the Allies as part of their war against Germany. Admiral Darlan is the head of most of the French Empire (North Africa, West Africa, Martinique), and is being supported by the Allies on the same grounds.

Intervention in Russia was throughout justified by the British and American Governments as a piece of sheer military necessity, having nothing to do with political motives or with taking sides in Russian internal affairs. The initiative came from the Allied military men on the spot, and the War Office was throughout the *de facto* leader of intervention.

In the last war Great Britain occupied the position of leadership in the grand alliance that has been assumed to-day by the United States. The official view of the exclusively military and non-political motives of Allied intervention is expounded and emphasised at length, e.g., in Mr. Lloyd George's *Memoirs*. One quotation will suffice:

> The problem with which the British Government and indeed the Allies as a whole were faced, was a purely military one. We were not concerned with the internal political troubles of Russia as such.

The Germans had to be prevented at any cost from obtaining possession of the vast stores of wheat and oil in the Ukraine and the Caucasus and from

> penetrating into Siberia and securing a hold upon it and its great natural resources . . . It was for this reason, not for any anti-Communist motives, that we decided to give support to the loyalist Russians who were in control of these fertile areas.

Defenders of the State Department's policy of appeasing Vichy are already asserting that if it had not been for this policy Hitler, instead of the Allies, would to-day be in control of the resources of the French African Empire.

Mr. Bruce Lockhart, who was the British Government's agent in Moscow at the time and therefore speaks with authority, throws a revealing light on the official view that intervention was undertaken for purely military reasons. He records a conversation noted at the time in his diary, with one Reynolds,

> a well-to-do timber merchant who had been very intimate with members of the Embassy staff. He had lost everything, and was very nervous, and was obsessed with only one idea; that we should make peace as soon as possible in order, in alliance with Germany, to restore order in Russia.
>
> I recall this conversation because it was typical of the point of view we were to find among the Russian bourgeois in Moscow and St. Petersburg during 1918. Yet in the face of these facts, all through this period, our military experts were writing memoranda about the loyal Russians and about the restoration of the Eastern Front, as if there were any Russians who thought of any other interests than their own, or of any other front than the civil war front once the Bolshevik revolution had started. This is not anti-Russian prejudice. It is plain common sense. An Englishman or a German, situated in similar circumstances, would have had the same thoughts and the same mental reactions. If there were Russians who accepted the English formula of restoring the Eastern Front and who talked of the sanctity of their oath to fight until victory was assured, they did so, consciously or unconsciously, with their tongues in their cheeks. The one aim of every Russian bourgeois (and 99 per cent. of the so-called "loyal" Russians were bourgeois) was to secure the intervention of British troops, and failing British, German troops, to re-establish order in Russia, suppress Bolshevism, and restore to the bourgeois his property.

No wonder that with these ideas Mr. Lockhart, from the point of view of the interventionists, was a bit of an *enfant terrible*. Mr. Lloyd George's *Memoirs* print a despatch from Lord (then Mr.) Balfour, the Foreign Secretary, and approved by the War Cabinet, to Mr. Lockhart, in which he is

somewhat tartly taken to task for his mistaken belief that Allied policy was "influenced" by hostility to the Bolsheviks and solicitude for "the bourgeois elements in Russia." "I must state clearly and emphatically in regard to this point," says Mr. Balfour, "that we are in no way concerned with the internal affairs of Russia as such; our sole interest in them is how they affect the war."

The military motives for backing Admiral Darlan are without doubt more substantial than in the case of Admiral Kolchak, General Denikin, etc. But it is difficult to differentiate between Admiral Darlan's motives and those of the Russian Whites, described by Mr. Lockhart. Attempts are already being made to suggest that Darlan has recovered his patriotism. It is fairly plain that he represents the switch-over of French Fascism from reliance on Nazi Germany to power-political bargaining with the democratic Allies, in order to survive the defeat of Germany and impose Fascism on the French people.

Whereas in Russia the alternative was support of the Bolsheviks, the alternative in this case would have been reliance on the resistance movement which in metropolitan France seems to be mainly working class, and it would have involved deliberate attempts to strengthen the anti-Fascist groups in North Africa. It was suggested that to encourage de Gaullist influence in North Africa would offend the Spanish generals on whom alone we could rely to resist if Hitler were to invade Spain. All doubts are supposed to be answered by the goodwill messages frequently delivered by President Roosevelt to the French people; and in particular by his formal announcement that co-operation with Darlan was entirely the child of military necessity and that political prisoners would also be released in North Africa and that nothing done would be out of step with the democratic aims of the United Nations. The sincerity of this announcement is beyond dispute. If there is at present no confirmation of the release of the prisoners and if Darlan is still in fact strengthening his position that is because his military value remains. But at what point will it be argued that he ceases to be a military necessity?

Again a parallel is suggestive. President Wilson was also a sincere democrat and really meant what he said in his goodwill messages to the Russian people and even to the Congress of Soviets, sent at the very time intervention was being prepared. As for democratic motives, what could be fairer than the following summary by Colonel House, of the reasons for which the President was being asked to accept the policy of intervention?

> The British Government considers that it is necessary for the Allies to unite in order to bring about a Russian national revival, and in order to be able to adopt a policy of freeing Russia from foreign control by means of Allied intervention. The Allies must, of course, avoid taking sides in Russian politics, and if the Bolshevist Government will co-operate in resisting Germany, it seems necessary to act with them as the *de facto* Russian Government.

Accordingly the Bolsheviks, who had asked for Allied assistance in resisting Germany, were offered this help in the form of a Japanese invasion of Siberia.

Mr. Lockhart prints Lenin's remarks on this generous offer: "One of the weakest spots in Balfour's speech is the statement that the Japanese are going to help the Russians. Which Russians? . . . The first step of those Russians whom the Japanese intend to 'help' as soon as they heard rumours of the advance of the latter, was to demand the abolition of the Soviet power."

When Lenin refused this offer, the Allies decided to give their "help," i.e. to intervene, and to let loose the Japanese, without the Bolsheviks' consent. Once again this could be described, not as interference in Russian internal affairs, but as realistic recognition of military necessity in the war against Germany.

Admiral Darlan and his Fascist henchmen are now mobilising and raising armies, which are being supplied with American weapons. When these armies, including Moors, Senegalese and Algerian Zouaves, are ready, it is to be presumed that they will demand to take part in the Allied offensive against Southern Europe by helping to liberate France. That at least is the only logic of the policy already announced by Darlan. Once again it will be said in some influential quarters that to reject Darlan's offer would be to deprive ourselves of the aid of a big army and probably risk trouble in North Africa, our military base for an attack on Europe. Any ulterior political consequences of the presence in France of Fascist armies directed by Darlan would, of course, be a matter of French internal politics with which we should have no concern and for which the British and American Governments would deny all responsibility. We should thus pursue a policy of non-intervention —Spanish style.

We have, in fact, already embarked on a policy of drift remarkably similar to that initiated with regard to Russia in the last war. Mr. Lloyd George's *Memoirs* reproduce one of Balfour's "most memorable State papers" submitted to the War Cabinet on December 9, 1917, and giving a comprehensive outline of the policy to be adopted towards the Russian Revolution. The document mentioned, only to reject, the suggestion that the Bolsheviks should "be regarded as avowed enemies" and treated as such. This "extreme" view is similar to that of the people in this country and the United States who are quite openly concerned to prevent any revolution in France following from the downfall of Vichy, and are therefore quite logically advocating the appeasement of Pétain (and of Franco and of similar elements in Belgium, Italy, Hungary and elsewhere). The course advocated by Balfour, and adopted by the Cabinet, was described by himself in his memorandum as "drifting by deliberate policy." It consisted, again as stated in his memorandum, of two parts:

> 1. We should represent to the Bolsheviks that we have no desire to take part in any way in the internal politics of Russia, and that any idea that we favour a counter-revolution is a profound mistake. Such a policy might be attractive to the autocratic governments of Germany and Austria, but not to the Western democracies or America. . . . We should continually repeat our readiness to accept the principle of self-determination.
>
> 2. At the same time as they tried to make the Bolsheviks believe these assurances, the Allies were to supply
>
> money to reorganise the Ukraine, to pay the Cossacks and the Caucasian forces, and to subsidise the Persians . . . Besides finance, it is important to have agents and officers to advise and support the provincial governments and their armies. It is essential that this should be done as quietly as possible, so as to avoid the imputation—as far as we can—that we are preparing to make war on the Bolsheviks.

This policy of "deliberate drift" culminated in the Japanese invasion of Siberia. Before that the Liberal members of the American Administration found themselves in a painful dilemma. *The Intimate Papers of Colonel House* describe it as follows:

> House was convinced that it was no longer possible simply to return a blank negative to Allied demands for intervention, and he pondered methods by which an Allied force could be introduced into Russia without arousing suspicion of Imperialistic motives.

The Allies are drifting to-day in the same direction, with the same mixed political motives and under the same military pretexts, as they did in the early stages of counter-revolutionary intervention in Russia.

ADVERTISED GOODS.—The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.

CENSORSHIP REGULATIONS allow readers to post this paper to any part of the British Empire (excepting Eire and Northern Ireland) and to any country of the American Continent (excepting dependencies of enemy-occupied countries) but readers are advised to consult a Post Office or a newsagent before attempting to post elsewhere.

POSTAGE on this issue is: Inland, 1½*d.*; *Foreign*, 1*d.*; *Canada*, 1*d.*

A LONDON DIARY

THE attack on the Beveridge Report has now been opened in the correspondence columns of the *Times*. People like Mr. O. T. Falk, who fear to see the drying up of personal charity, and Sir Arnold Gridley, M.P., who wants us to keep an open mind about the Report until the danger of the public being seriously interested in it is passed, are holding the first line while reinforcements from the great Insurance Societies gather in the rear. I remember hearing how powerful these bodies were in 1931; immediately after that iniquitous election I heard reports from constituencies where the Conservative majority was attributed to the work of insurance canvassers who went round from house to house warning ignorant people of the inflation and ruin that would follow if Labour were not defeated. I hear that these societies are now mobilising their great resources once again. It is worth while to take down Sir Arnold Wilson's and Hermann Levy's great insurance trilogy, *Burial Reform*, *Industrial Assurance* and *Workman's Compensation* from the shelves; they will probably need dusting, but they contain all the information which other people were not brave enough to print.

* * *

Sir William has been given every opportunity of publicity. Clearly the word has gone out that this Report is not to be smothered. It has been fully and fairly treated on the wireless as well as by the *Times* and, indeed, almost all the newspapers. The paper which displayed genuine anxiety was the *Daily Telegraph*. If the Conservative Party is true to its traditions its policy will be to accept some innocuous parts of the Beveridge Report in order to give its spokesmen something to say in the constituencies when they are asked whether wartime promises were to be completely sabotaged. All the big guns will then be brought out to fight the parts of the Report that the Conservatives really dislike, and the battle will be fought on issues where Capitalism can afford to give some ground without danger to itself. In brief, the Beveridge Report cannot be pushed aside as revolutionary or irresponsible, so it may as well be accepted as the basis for controversy. The best comment I have seen on it was made by Mrs. Webb, who is as alive to current issues at eighty-four as she was forty years ago. She pointed out that the Beveridge Report was helpful in showing workers the kind of thing they had a right to expect, but that post-war capitalism will certainly find it difficult to afford; it will therefore make it more easy for everyone to understand that the right principle is to plan production for the benefit of the community and not to attempt to make unplanned capitalism provide the workers with security.

* * *

I understand that the censorship restrictions on the Darlan business which have interfered with the outspoken honesty of American wireless commentators have now been withdrawn. Possibly the strength of public feeling here, which is certainly shared by some, if not most, of the members of the British Government, has made it impossible any longer to hide the truth. Perhaps the view of the Russian Government, represented by Mr. Maisky, has had some effect. Whatever the reason, the American public is now likely to learn in unexpurgated detail that many people in this country feel, as I heard a high official say the other day, that the attempt to co-operate with Darlan is as morally pleasant and looks like being as militarily satisfactory as Mr. Chamberlain's effort to use Hitler at Munich. He added that "Munich was also an effort to save life." On which another comment was that everyone knew that it was more dangerous to fight against Fascism than in alliance with it; the point about this war is that we were supposed to be opposed to it. How far such talk is justified depends, of course, on whether Darlan proves as temporary as the President hopes to make him. In any case the idea of censoring comment on such a matter was misconceived. Anglo-American relations will be much more damaged by censorship than by frankness, if only

because most Americans really feel just as we do on the point. I heard the astonished and indignant murmurs in Washington when the news first came through, and experienced the futile efforts of censorship there, too. In a cable message (which appeared in censored form in this journal November 21st) I said that many Americans were troubled by the Darlan business, but that things might be better if the President made a speech promising the release of political prisoners and explaining that we were only temporarily backing Darlan for military reasons. The President made that very speech immediately after my cable, but the American censorship had cut out all the passage in my message referring to the subject. This type of censorship on both sides of the Atlantic only does harm. The two democracies, if they are to remain democracies, will have to discuss things frankly, as Mr. Wendell Willkie explained in what I thought an admirably clear article in the *Evening Standard* last Monday night.

* * *

If the press says too little about the latest Nazi campaign against the Jews that is because the scale of horror passes comment. The only fit comment is to underline the urgency of defeating the Nazis and their imitators as quickly as possible. But knowledge of the almost incredible facts should be spread; there are still, astonishingly, Fascists who shout their anti-semitic slogans in Holborn Hall on a Saturday afternoon (reported, I think, only in the *Daily Worker*, which disagrees with the gentlemanly assumption that Fascism will be killed by silence). Further, there are still States bordering on Germany where anti-semitic sadists may be deterred from giving free play to their instincts if they see that public opinion in the United Nations feels strongly on the subject and will regard Fascists as criminals when the victory comes. The facts seem not in dispute. Some of the news comes from Sweden, whose newspapers still keep correspondents in Berlin. It seems that an order of last month provided that the *Generalitat*, Poland outside the German frontier, should be "Jew-free" by December 31st, except the Warsaw ghetto. In the whole of the eastern territories Jews are to be confined to fourteen ghetto towns, into which no one else may go, and out of which Jews may not come. "Infringements will be punished with death. Help given to Jews outside the town, offering them shelter, food, etc., will be punished with death." A million seven hundred thousand Polish Jews outside the Warsaw ghetto are to be "liquidated." Various methods are used; one of the most terrible and familiar is to pack a hundred-odd Jews into a cattle truck which will hold forty, and send them by rail to unknown destinations. Unknown, indeed; the surmises range from labour in the Ukraine to gas-chambers in several Polish towns. Many do not arrive alive; those who do are jammed tight between standing corpses. The deportation of Norwegian Jews in November, a thousand of them, from old invalids to babies, was witnessed in horror by the people; some Quisling officials even resigned on account of it. The Swedish bishops have united in protest and in telling their people to aid the victims as a Christian duty, as has the Archbishop of Canterbury here. No doubt many decent people do try to help them; there are even said to be puppet governments which wink at baptisms, the furnishing of forged papers and other devices to avert the Gestapo fury. But countries outside Germany are largely powerless to aid; and Nazis no longer show the faintest sensibility to world opinion. As to the purpose of this policy, incredible though it sounds, it does seem actually to aim at extermination.

* * *

I have read with much interest the third Annual Report of the Friends' Ambulance Unit, which covers the year up to last September. Aid in reconstructing Ethiopia, surgical work during the fighting in Burma, the establishment of clinics for the desert villages of Syria, transport of medical supplies along the Burma Road to China, medical assistance to five thousand Chinese in Assam—it is a useful and remarkable record. Two of its members fell victims to typhus in the China Unit. Anyone who reads of the Unit's work in the Bekau valley where there is no sanitation, and a good proportion of the world's diseases, will remember Nick Alderson, who established village medical units in the Near East, and was later killed in Libya, as a real pioneer. The Unit, which maintains a personnel of 668 persons, needs £30,000 for training, equipment and services not covered by specific grant; donations can be sent to the Treasurers at 4 Gordon Square, W.C.1. One can have, as I have, a sense that in social doctrine the Friends have never fulfilled the promise foreshadowed by the Quaker pioneers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. But when it comes to relief work, the nobility of the Friends' achievement is, proportionately, unequalled by any other religious body.

* * *

A friend, who is now a private in the British Army, tells me a story which I hope will become a classic illustration of Army method. He sleeps with others in a small room, the windows of which are never opened. So terrific is the fug at nights that the medical officer became alarmed and an order came round that all black-outs were to be taken down after lights out. No one objects to the order which is mechanically obeyed: it is regularly carried out in spite of the difficulty of clambering about in the dark and the recurrent risk of the late-comer switching on the light. The authorities, who gave the order, blandly assume that now the black-out is down the windows will be opened and the danger of spreading infection be considerably reduced. But, in fact, the idea of opening the windows (not mentioned in the order) has not yet occurred to any of the men. The fug remains.

* * *

Somewhere hidden from the public eye one may find a large room full of elderly ladies, getting an obvious kick out of reading in a large variety of languages the private letters of other people. This is a branch of censorship. One day—this is a true story—the colonel, to whom these ladies report, asked if any one there had found anything of importance. "Well," said one of the censors, "I have here one letter which I am afraid I don't really understand. I think it must be written by a Lesbian." "Really," said the colonel, "that is very interesting. Is there any lady among you who reads Lesbian?"

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to Basil Davis.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

The Beveridge scheme caused more depression than any war news since the British battleships were sunk off Singapore almost a year ago.—*Manchester Guardian.*

Ernest Bevin, Richard Acland and William Temple are typical barbarians in finance; they exhibit the most vulgar ignorance of a world of experience, judgment, wisdom and efficiency, which has never said much about itself, but has quietly grown into the most perfect of human services.—Sir Ernest Benn in *Truth.*

At the London Coliseum recently, a representative sent there by the Lord's Day Observance Society sat in the stalls, and because a soprano wore a frock which he considered was a crinoline the performance was stopped and the singer had to change into street clothes before she could continue.—*Manchester Guardian.*

EDEN'S FAREWELL TO DE GAULLE

(After "The Arab's Farewell to his Steed")

It was intended . . . De Gaulle should broadcast to Europe. The script was submitted for approval . . . and approved by Mr. Eden . . . subsequently it was suppressed.—Mr. Stokes, M.P. (24th Nov., 1942.)

The British Government does not in any way consider itself bound by Admiral Darlan's statement.—Mr. Eden, House of Commons (3rd Dec., 1942.)

Mon Général! mon Général! who standest fiercely by,
With thy fiery but unuttered speech, and dark accusing eye,
Fret not to roam the desert now with thine impetuous speed,
Another voice is raised for France, her fighting force to lead—
Thou shalt not scour the distant plain to rally French morale,
There is no reasonable doubt, thou'rt sold, mon Général!
Arrangements of our great Ally are not to be controlled;
Another steals thy thunder now, mon Général! thou'rt sold.

And shall I follow Washington and back Darlan's cabal?
I may not take thy side again; farewell! mon Général!
Farewell! farewell! and yet, may not a formula be found?
Whatever Darlan may proclaim, it seems we are not bound;
And dost thou think mine ancient pledge was merest persiflage,
And is thy dream of Fighting France naught now but false mirage?
Ah! when I hear another call to rouse the Arab Sheik,
How sadly I'll recall the time when last I let thee speak!

When last I let thee speak? Away! the fever'd dream is o'er,
That ill-considered censorship shall part us twain no more.
They tempted me, mon Général! with hopes of compromise,
The moment French North Africa declared for the Allies.
Who said that I had giv'n thee up, who said that thou wert sold?
'Tis false, 'tis false, mon Général! I shall, like thee, be bold!
They tempted me to turn thee down—but no, it cannot be—
Though thou wert sold, mon Général! thou wast not sold by me.

SAGITTARIUS

THE TIED COTTAGE

THE Scott Committee recognised the urgent necessity for the building of more cottages in the rural areas, and the Ministry of Health has announced that the Committee's recommendations are now being considered by the Ministry's Rural Housing Committee. It is of the first importance that the cottages should be built by and should remain in the possession of the local authorities and that they should not be erected by subsidised private builders, with the probability of later passing into the possession of the farmers.

With the exception of six Council cottages and three or four others, all the cottages in the village that I know best are owned by one or other of the local farmers. Some of the cottages are quite admirably comfortable and convenient, better indeed than the Council cottages. All of them provide adequate homes though without modern conveniences. In this respect the village is exceptional. There are still many slum areas in rural England, but, whether the cottages are good or bad, it is an obvious evil that the worker's employer should also be his landlord, and the

National Union of Agricultural Workers, which, since the beginning of the war, has considerably added to its membership, is now putting the abolition of the tied cottage system in the forefront of its programme.

The general rule is that the cottage, on the farm or in the neighbouring village, goes with the job, and if the worker leaves his job he has to leave his cottage. The law gives him some small protection. The farmer-landlord cannot evict without showing reasonable cause. The Increase of Rent and Mortgage Interest (Restrictions) Act of 1920 and subsequent Acts compelled the farmer, before he could give notice to quit, to apply to the County Agricultural Committee for a certificate that the cottage was needed for the cultivation of his farm. If this certificate was granted, the farmer could apply to the magistrates or the County Court judge for an ejectment order. The Agricultural Committee was not concerned with whether or not there was any alternative accommodation in the neighbourhood. That could be argued before the magistrate or the County Court judge. In many cases the County Court judge has refused to grant the ejectment order on the ground that there was no place for the tenant to find shelter, but the National Union alleges that J.P.s, mostly landowners, often, disregard the fact that eviction may mean homelessness.

Things have been made worse by the transfer by the Board of Agriculture, early this year, of the power to grant certificates from the County Agricultural Committees, on which labour was often fairly represented, to the County War Agricultural Executive Committees on which the Union says that labour is often outvoted by ten to one. Moreover, the County Agricultural Committees charged an investigation fee of two guineas which had to be paid whether the certificate were granted or not. The War Executive Committees charge no fees and this encourages the applications for eviction. Worse than that, the Agricultural Committees only met once a quarter and if the tenant were threatened with the loss of his home he had time to look round. The War Executive Committees meet every fortnight, and the unlucky man can be promptly got rid of.

In these days of a dearth of skilled labour in the countryside, no competent worker is likely to lose his job and his home, but men incapacitated by accident or illness and widows are now being turned out of homes where they have often lived for years. The Union has a record of such cases.

The tied cottage system has had complementary evils. When the supply of labour exceeded the demand the worker was obliged to take the farmer's cottage, however bad was its condition, or he was not engaged, and his wife had often to agree to work in the farmhouse or the fields. I do not suggest this has been the general rule. Indeed, in the district that I know, the farmers are kindly and considerate employers. But the system lends itself to abuses, and it is to be remembered that feudalism continues in rural England to an extent that amazes the townsman. The country worker is still expected to do what he is told in a dozen ways outside his work.

It is only fair to recognise that, in existing conditions, the farmer has considerable justification for the desire that his cottages shall be reserved for effective labourers. He is being compelled by the Board of Agriculture vastly to increase his production. As it is, he is woefully short-handed, and, if one of his men falls ill or dies, and if he is lucky enough to find another to take his place, there is nowhere for the men to live unless a cottage is vacated.

From the point of view, therefore, of national wellbeing as well as of justice to the workers, there is everything to be said for the recent declaration of the judge of the Salisbury County Court that the building of cottages on a considerable scale should begin now and that the country housing scheme should not be postponed until after the war. Unless that is done, there will be a progressive shortage of labour and the maximum production of food will not be attained.

The Union estimates that 250,000 new cottages are required by rural workers. It demands that they shall be "free houses," built and owned by public authorities and they shall, as the Archbishop of Canterbury has insisted, be "decent and dignified." The Union also demands that it shall be made illegal for any farmer to let a cottage as a condition of entering his service. This would only be an extension of the Truck Act. The Union claims that, if the worker lives in a cottage owned by his employer, he shall have the same security of tenure as is enjoyed by all other rent-paying tenants.

I know from my personal contacts that the farm worker is growing tired of being patted on the back and of being assured that his work is of priceless value to the nation. He wants the same freedom as the town worker has been granted; he wants the same decencies of life, a bath, running water and more home space; he wants the social amenities which Parish Councils have optional powers to provide and which they rarely do provide because they are the preserves of landlords and farmers. The "free cottage" is the first of his demands. It will not be the last.

SIDNEY DARK

NO INTELLECTUALS

It has often been maintained that the English distrust the intellect. We used to be told that in France, Germany and various other countries, intellect was respected even by those who had almost no intellects. England, on the other hand, was depicted as a land in which fox-hunting squires and rich men created the national ideal; and obviously it does not require an abnormal amount of brains to ride in pursuit of a fox or to grow rich.

I have often wondered whether this picture of the comparative intellectualism of foreigners was ever true. Has there ever been a nation in which great universities have been more generally honoured than in England? Is there any other nation in which even a boatrace between the scholars of two rival universities has become a national event, as exciting almost as Derby Day or a Test Match? Is there any other country in which a School Tie has become such a world-wide symbol—until recently—of everything necessary to the perfection of human life?

No. England has never despised her universities and schools. If she has earned a name for indifference to the intellect, this is largely due to her excessive modesty. During the nineteenth century in particular, while carrying on with her boat races, she took it for granted that the Germans were her superiors in philosophy and scholarship. The Germans were represented by many people as a nation of bespectacled pipe-smokers who loved nothing better than to pass an evening discussing Kant, Hegel and Fichte. As for scholarship, a German had only to blue-pencil half a masterpiece of a Greek or Roman author as spurious in order to be hailed as a scholar of genius. I remember, when I was reading Thucydidés, being told to mark clause after clause as dubious because some eminent German scholar—was his name Christ?—had decided that it was so. Theology, in the same way, was largely foreign; and the house in which I lived was filled with translations of four-volume German books on this or that aspect of Christianity and on the question who had not written what in various books of the New Testament. Germany was the land of intellectual light—a lantern of scholarship burning in mid-Europe.

I do not wish to suggest that the high opinions men then had of Germany as a land of philosophy and scholars was mistaken. Being neither a philosopher nor a scholar, I am not competent to say whether Germany was or was not supreme in these intellectual fields as in music. I wonder, however, whether reverence of the intellect was ever so common in Germany or so rare in England as was then generally supposed. I remember many years ago a man who had been educated at a German university telling me that, while he was there, he used to attend a working-men's debating society, and that it would be impossible

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anywhere in England to find a group of working men capable of such intelligent discussion. To him the ordinary German seemed to be more interested in the things of the mind, whereas his English counterpart was interested mainly in horse-racing and public house gossip. He gave one the impression that Germans were nearly all intellectuals, and that the English were in comparison a people who hated using their brains as a sluggard hates using his muscles.

That the Germans were not very long ago the best-educated people in Europe is possibly true. But how odd it is that within less than two generations their country should have become the chief centre of hostility to the intellectual life. It is common enough in England to hear denunciations of "highbrows" and "intellectuals"; but how odd such a thing seems in the land of Goethe! Perhaps it is a reaction from a surfeit of learning. Whatever may be the explanation, Germany seems to have come round to the opinion of the fox-hunters, and to regard the intellect as something unworthy of the great Nordic race.

"National Socialism wants no intellectuals," said a Nazi in Holland the other day in an address to students of Utrecht University. I wonder whether English undergraduates at the outset of their careers were ever warned against the use of their brains in this fashion. Retired colonels at school prize-givings have sometimes boasted that, when they themselves were at school, they never did a stroke of work, and were always, so to speak, at the bottom of the class; and in this way they have given the impression that prize-winners who used their mental muscles were a kind of sneaking fellows not in the best English tradition. At the same time Englishmen in their hearts respect a Double First almost as much as they respect a Blue. The popularity of a B.B.C. feature entitled the Brains Trust is evidence of the English reverence for the intellect. To a nation that was indifferent to the things of the mind a turn with such a name would have been anathema.

And, indeed, even those who use the word "intellectual" as a term of reprobation do not as a rule mean to express dislike of the intelligence. I do not know when the noun was first used in a disparaging sense: a hurried look through the *New English Dictionary* throws no light on the subject. But I imagine that the custom of looking on intellectuals as a special class, as well as the custom of mocking them, came from abroad. We used to hear of the Intelligentsia of Russia, and many Russians laughed at them as talkers without the virtue of action. Others, listening to them, regarded them as the Not-Very-Intelligentsia, and denied that even their words had wisdom. On the whole, however, I imagine that the chief accusation against those who are now called intellectuals has in most ages been a certain pretentiousness and Pharisaical self-satisfaction. The typical intellectual is, rightly or wrongly, supposed to be in his own eyes a superior person because he reads books that ordinary men and women cannot read, and admires pictures that ordinary men and women cannot make head or tail of. The ordinary man, on the other hand, has a way of persuading himself that everybody who enjoys books and pictures that are Greek to him is an impostor. Readers of the later Browning and the later Henry James were at one time suspected of being merely humbugs. And, undoubtedly, some of them were. Fashion influences literary taste as it influences costume; and many people naturally feel happier if they are in the fashion. To like the right authors is as important to them as to leave the lowest waistcoat button undone when this is the right thing to do. But why a fashionably read man should be regarded as more of a humbug than a fashionably dressed man it is not easy to explain. Perhaps the reason is that the fashionably read man among the intellectuals is always in a minority and so belongs to a sect opposed to the tastes of the community, whereas the fashionably dressed man is a yes-man from his heels to his hat.

In England the intellectual nowadays is usually called a highbrow, and seldom is the word "highbrow" used as a term of praise. The ordinary man, however, in attacking highbrows is merely defending himself from his lower-browed tastes. He feels as superior for not liking Bach as he believes the highbrow feels for liking Bach. His resentment of highbrows is a mark of his love of equality, perhaps, and he will not have it that a man who can read *Paradise Lost* or *Finnegan's Wake* with enjoyment is on that account a better man than he.

The English objection to the intellectual seems always to have been that he is not an ordinary human being—that he is a freak like a conceited white blackbird. The German objection seems to be rather that he is a recalcitrant citizen who cannot be made to goose-step in time with the mass of obedient citizens. He is a heretic, not so much in his artistic opinions as in his politics. That is the suspected danger in a country in which every minority is regarded as a menace. The odd thing is that, just as the intellectuals are being suppressed in Germany, they have begun to flourish in England as they have never flourished before. If the late Henry James were writing to-day, his books would probably be selling not in hundreds but in tens of thousands. One could almost believe, indeed, that England is becoming a land of intellectuals if one never went to the theatre.

Y. Y.

A POSITIVE PLEASURE

"THERE are books," said the squire, "which it is a positive pleasure to read." There are theatres which it is a positive pleasure to be in; but they are rare. Those charming remnants of the eighteenth century, the *Fenice* at Venice, the *Residenz Theater* at Munich, were made to please an audience which went to the play as much to enjoy company and amenity as to listen to actors and singers. They are not well contrived for seeing or hearing. Neither are those less charming but still agreeable houses of the Second Empire and Victorian epoch, the *Palais Royal* and *Variétés*, *Covent Garden* and the *Criterion*; though to the charm of that dear, delightful relic of Victorian splendour, the Opera House, even planners pay tribute by an almost unanimous resolution to destroy it. And I can understand that those feminine curves and horseshoes which give nineteenth-century auditoria their peculiar allure have to be paid for by a number of seats from which it is quite impossible to see a good part of the stage. They are unpractical: nevertheless they were made to please.

Somewhere about the turn of the century arose, or sank—for many of them are largely subterranean—theatres in what may be called the Shaftesbury Avenue taste. These, presumably, were made to please the shareholders; they are designed to hold as much "money" as possible, and the ticket-buyers are expected to have no eyes for anything but the stage. Yet, as it turned out, even they were not perfectly contrived for seeing and hearing; and so they led to the scientific interior, remorselessly planned, and suggesting not so much a playhouse as an operating theatre. Between the wars functional theatres of this kind multiplied in Europe and, I make no doubt, in America; let the *Pigalle* in Paris serve as an example and a warning. I hope these antiseptic interiors pleased the architects, for they can have given no pleasure to anyone else.

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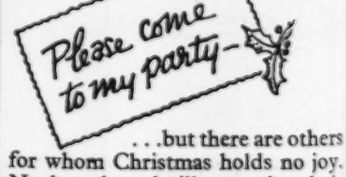

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provided everything from the curtain to the chandeliers, from the paintings in the foyer to the form of the box office. This it is a positive pleasure to look at. Also, I am assured, it is practical; the requirements neither of the public, nor of the producer, nor of the County Council having been overlooked. If I call it a painter's theatre that is because, whereas hitherto the painter has had to accept what the architect chose to give him and make the best of what was often an impossible job, here the initiative is with the painter who, having conceived the decoration as a whole, invites the architect to build according to his (the painter's) plan. No architect worthy to be called an artist would refuse for once to play second fiddle any more than during hundreds of years the greatest painters have refused to accept problems handed to them by architects. But should one be so foolish as to give himself superior airs it would, I imagine, be easy for an engineer to cast the painter's model in concrete. Anyhow, I think no one who concerns himself with the theatre will be bored by this exhibition, and I am sure that anyone who cares for the look of things will be pleased.

CLIVE BELL

THE MOVIES

"Thunder Rock" at the Empire

Whether to go to *Thunder Rock* or not depends on whether you have seen the play. If you have, the film is bound to be disappointing. Not that it isn't tastefully photographed and well acted—better acted, indeed, with Redgrave in his old part and Bernard Valk, Lilli Palmer, Barbara Mullen assisting, than on the stage. The situation still holds, and the moments of uneasy hovering between real and unreal are smoothed out. When the "characters" first come down the staircase they are made to lean away a little like shadows and their footsteps are silent; afterwards when they are recalled, and walk naturally, the gain in solidity has been subtly prepared for. Charleston's dilemma hasn't been vulgarised or simplified at all; and that is a meritorious achievement. "It's so elegant, so intelligent," we may murmur, as the film ends and a diversion called *Fraidy Cat* takes its place on the screen. But still something has been missed. Not the point; that is even underlined. Not the characters; we see more into their lives than we did on the stage, and Charleston himself dives back into pre-war episodes when, so far from escaping, he pursued the world. What has been lost, or partly lost, is that compactness of symbolism, drama, poetry and ideas that made *Thunder Rock* a remarkable play. The stage jammed everything into the lighthouse, a headpiece in which the escapist mind could think its thoughts; this compression has been scattered in the film, which begins with comic scenes in an office hundreds of miles away, and keeps on opening corridors in different directions. Hitler at a sports meeting in Nuremburg, Vienna a hundred years ago, the doomed boatload crossing Lake Michigan, cafés and conferences in Geneva, Guernica: all these are, so to speak, "thrown in." The effect is not only to slow down the action and create parentheses, but to break the spell by which alone such a drama can succeed. One method, on the screen, would have been to make everything more subjective and to use photographic imagery to take us a step nearer the conflict in Charleston's mind. It mightn't come off, but it is a possibility. The present *Thunder Rock* is a compromise between stage and screen, with the screen honourably losing.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

PLAYS AND PICTURES

Morley College Concert

Time was when all Europe awaited Stravinsky's latest work with tip-toe excitement. Composed in California four years ago, his Dumbarton Oaks Concerto was given its first concert performance in this country by a string orchestra which Walter Goehr brought along to Morley College last Saturday. One looked round at the audience packed in the Holst Room and remembered that it was almost twenty years ago that Stravinsky gave the first performance of his Wind Octet at the Paris Opera. Twenty years, however, have not removed the cruel cynicism that has rotted this great musician. Occasionally one does catch a glimpse of the old vitality—a gurgle from the bassoon or some grim buffoonery between wood-wind and strings. Yet when the work was over, all that remained was a recollection of strange unloveliness, of something sterile and unbelievably sad.

Two other new works were heard. Matyas Seiber, a pupil of Kodaly, is an accomplished musician, and his Pastorale and Burlesque for flute and strings is effective. The flute flashes against persistent rhythms, it leaps and dances, or it is tender and cajoling. But all this might have been done by one of a dozen radio or film composers. There was more fantasy in a movement from Michael Tippett's Double Concerto for Strings opening with an arresting theme, not far removed from Tchaikovsky, which, however, soon becomes painfully locked up in itself. Tippett, in fact, lacks just that facility which Seiber has in excess. These concerts at Morley College seem to be establishing an alliance between a number of Continental musicians recently settled in this country, and a certain group of native artists whose approach to music is, in a better sense of the word, amateur.

Correspondence

BEVERIDGE REPORT

SIR,—The Beveridge Report would establish three precedents of great value to the cause of Socialism. They are (1) Right of the State to engage in all forms of personal insurance; (2) Duty of the State to its citizens to see that everyone is covered; (3) Equal rewards for men and women.

The big insurance companies do not like it at all, but what is good for them is bad for us, and conversely. It therefore behoves all people to fight for it and to see that it is adopted. To fight for it is not only necessary. It will prove very useful by forcing some of the reactionaries to come out into the open so that they can be given notoriety and be marked down for the future. Too often they are able to work behind the scenes. The Beveridge Report provides an opportunity for us to challenge them so that they have to show themselves or let the matter drop.

The growing strength of the people has caused the Government to have the report drawn up. A successful fight for its adoption would further increase the strength of the people, and give a fillip to their morale with regard to their future prospects.

110 Bunbury Road, Birmingham, 31. A. E. SCARR

SIR,—This report extracts such unanimous support from the ruling class and its supporters that the class-conscious worker instinctively knows that it is directed against him. True some vested interests will oppose it. Why? Because by doing so they will increase the compensation that they know that their friends will hand over. But stripped of its glamour it stands naked as an attempt to perpetuate class rule, and at the expense of the ruled. There is no security for the worker under class rule as was proved by the 2s. reduction of the dole in the last financial crisis; also prices may soar, say 50 per cent., causing a proportional reduction in the value of benefits. Therefore it is obviously our duty to strive vigorously for the termination of class rule, and meanwhile, make the most of this crumb of reform by pressing for the following:—

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AN ASPECT OF RECONSTRUCTION

SIR,—Now that 120 prominent British industrialists, apprehensive of too speedy a reduction in scarcity after the war, have pronounced in favour of the international cartel, it is imperative that consideration should be given to the problem of the preservation or the speedy restoration of the amenities associated with cartel negotiations. The cartel boys, tough as they are in spirit, like to work in comfort, and the output quotas tend to be a function of the quality of the accommodation and service forthcoming at the Conference locale. I am assured by one of the acolytes, who used to attend on these occasions to see that there was no jiggery-pokery with the calculating machines, that in spite of door-to-door travel in high-powered cars and what were virtually diplomatic privileges at the Customs, the early proceedings always tended to be somewhat liverish, and it was not until after two days of *haute cuisine* that someone began to argue, "Why not let the poor devils (meaning the general public) have a bit more?" He also told me that on the eve of one of the big non-ferrous pow-wows, by a series of mishaps a prominent delegate had to put up at the Café du Commerce opposite the station, and next morning in a just fury he opened with a livid demand for the immediate closing down of one refinery in four all over the world. It took four days of exclusive attention by the head waiter and two cases of Johannisberger *Feinste Auslese* to get him to come round to a one-in-six proposition. We want the boys to be in an expansive mood in their first reunions after the Armistice, and the basic price and output figures for potash, coke, steel, scrap, wood screws, aluminium, zinc, dyes, nitrates, citric acid, lead oxide, bismuth, artificial horn, quinine, Glauber's salt, whale oil, paraffin, magnesium, bottles, electric bulbs, rayon, cement, rubber, and lord knows how many other, commodities, will vary considerably according to whether the delegates round off a meal with coffee and liqueurs or bi-carbonate of soda. That is why I ask if anyone is seeing to it that the rooms with a south aspect are being kept aired, that a supply of caviare is being held in reserve, and that blue ribbon chefs are scheduled for early demobilisation. If after a bumpy air passage the boys are crowded in an east wing and served with Algerian wine out of carafes, bone-glue, iodides, linoleum and other delicacies are going to be in short supply for a few more decades. In this connection there should be an understanding between the belligerent Air Forces that in their praiseworthy contributions towards slum clearance they should steer clear of the three-starred caravanserai at the best spas. Discussion on this point might hold up the current amicable negotiations about the shackling of prisoners, but I am sure that the bulk of my fellow-consumers will agree that the first is the more urgent problem. G. L. SCHWARTZ

REGULATION 33B

SIR,—Regulation 33B is the natural and inevitable corollary to the policy that has been followed by the Ministry of Health for the past 30 years. That policy is to let Venereal Disease go on occurring, unprevented, and to treat cases as soon as they can be discovered. If it is found that certain persons are actively spreading the disease, some repressive measures are obviously indicated. The whole policy is unscientific and futile, and ignores proved scientific facts.

Long experience in this subject has convinced me that quite a number of fanatics do not desire the extermination of these diseases except through moral persuasion or fear of consequences. They prefer, apparently, that V.D. should continue to exist as a flaming sword in the path of the wrongdoer, regardless of the fact that thousands of perfectly innocent people become infected as the result of such a policy.

In your interesting notes on 33B in your issue of November 28th, you say "an effective method of checking V.D. would be welcome." Regulation 33B *might* prevent five per cent. of the cases, but effective methods are *known* which could and would prevent *most* of the cases.

As far back as 1907 scientific discoveries were made which, with further practical experience obtained during the last war, put these diseases at the mercy of mankind, but up to the present various powerful influences have prevented us receiving these benefits in this country.

About 30 years ago the National Society for the Prevention of Venereal Disease was established for the express purpose of educating the public in those simple scientific preventive measures which, when adopted, have proved to result in the abolition of Venereal Disease. The public in general, and the Forces in particular, are not allowed to know that there are easily applied practical preventive measures which could and would stamp out these foul diseases from our midst.

Although fanatical opposition has prevented the work of the Society from securing a sufficiently wide appreciation to cause the general elimination of V.D., some notable triumphs have been achieved. During the last war, as part of my military duties, I was V.D. Officer over a considerable military area. I succeeded in spreading among the troops a knowledge and adoption of practical preventive measures, with the result that Venereal Disease diminished in that area as if by waving a magic wand. Similar results were obtained by Sir Archdall Reid in Portsmouth, as described in his enlightening book "*Prevention of Venereal Disease*" (Heinemann).

Prominent among the forces that have prevented the prevention of V.D. is the Ministry of Health. Those county and county borough councils which became convinced about the policy of the Society have been discouraged or intimidated by the Ministry when they proposed to give financial support to the work of the Society. A number of valiant local authorities have, however, in defiance of the Ministry, persistently supported the Society, so that the extraordinary campaign to keep the public in ignorance has not fully succeeded.

33, Methuen Road, Bournemouth. R. A. LYSTER, M.D., etc.
Chairman, National Society for Prevention of V.D.

SIR,—Can we have some reality on this question of Venereal Disease infection? Those of us with prolonged practical experience know that only by 33B can we get at the core of the problem, which is the infectious person who will not under any circumstances less than compulsion come for examination and treatment. Let us be honest and admit that women more than men will be affected, because the symptoms are obvious in men, in women often masked. It is this masking of symptoms that makes the woman who refuses to come for treatment so dangerous and such a burden on the community.

In a small town under my jurisdiction, we have two women whom we have known for years as coming within this group, they have infected many men, particularly since the war. We have been powerless to prevent the spread of the disease. On the publication in the press of 33B, our visitors made another effort to get them to come for examination and treatment. They have both been, both were heavily infectious and are having treatment. The powers are not in force, but the publication of the Order and the follow up have done all we need.

I do not believe we shall ever need to resort to the Order, but its existence will give us all the power we need. If, and I think it extremely unlikely to happen, we suspect anyone of being blackmailed, the police

Constituent Assembly for India

Professor N. GANGULEE

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County Hall, County Medical Officer.
Boston, Lincs.

UNPROMISED ISLAND

SIR,—I asked Mr. Cranston a few plain questions; he replies by brandishing at me his anti-Zionist cudgel; I am glad I have caused him thus to display it, and beat time with it to his Mauritius song. He continues to harp on deportation of Jewish refugees as the alternative to drowning: Lord Cranborne thought differently, and his tenure of the Colonial Office was not marred by incidents of either kind; and we may hope that no other Mauritius or *Struma* will occur in the future. As for Palestine "overcrowding." At the time of the Mauritius deportations the High Commissioner withheld the issue of certificates for legal immigration not on grounds of "overcrowding," but of the difficult "circumstances of international travel"! And at the time of the *Struma* disaster the Jewish Agency actually held permits for 3,000 immigrants, but was forbidden to use them for saving the 768 *Struma* passengers. If Mr. Cranston will formulate his story of the deportations and drownings, and his defence of the policy which led to them I shall deal with the matter.

Anyone reading Mr. Cranston's article might have thought that it was by someone just arrived from Mauritius and anxious to retail what he himself had seen. Now we learn that he has not been there, and that he writes from second-hand information. His chief source, as I guessed, is the official report, whose existence he never mentioned in the article. By implication he suggests that I impugn its "veracity" when, in fact, I merely called it "rather rose-coloured." Moreover, every document has to be interpreted according to its nature, and no one expects an official report to expatiate, for instance, on serious shortcomings or sufferings which, for some reason or other, the administrators in charge feel unable to prevent; while well-intentioned programmes are only too apt in official documents to be transformed into things achieved. I do, however, expect a serious writer—historian or journalist—to avow from the outset the character of the sources on which he relies.

Mr. Cranston says that he also had reports from internees: so have I. He talks of the Jewish refugees as "comfortably interned" in Mauritius. I am not out to blame the local authorities for things which it may have been impossible for them to remedy. But will Mr. Cranston, to whom the "Mauritius experiment" appears "exceptionally praiseworthy," answer these few questions? What are the provisions for family life among the detainees? Under what circumstances did husbands and wives meet during the first eighteen months of their detention? Of what material were the huts made in which the women were housed? Is the quality of the food such as to safeguard the health of the detainees? Mr. Cranston says that the detainees were "accepted . . . as guests from the very beginning"; will he state how much freedom these "guests" had, say, during the first year, or enjoy even now, of going outside the camp? And what facilities were granted to citizens of Allied States for communicating with their Governments, and when? Does he know how many of the detainees volunteered for service with the Allied armies, how long it took even the Czechoslovaks to obtain their release for that purpose, and how the problem of the others stands at present? I do not propose to enter into smaller complaints or minor divergencies in the evidence, and I would not have started discussing the subject in the press from second-hand information and in view of unsolved contradictions, had it not been for what I must call once more Mr. Cranston's "sudden incursion into the story." I have before me, among other reports one signed by three responsible ex-detainees, all men of standing, and two of whom had special authority to speak and act for a considerable part of the camp—here are its conclusions (in the document's own English):

> From all that has been told it is obvious that the Government of Mauritius took pains to oblige the camp, to make life there bearable and render our stay there more comfortable so that one really could speak of a certain camp *niveau*. But even if we fully acknowledge the efforts of the authorities we cannot help remembering the fact that malaria goes on ruining more and more of our people, that they suffer from avitaminosis. These two facts alone prove that Mauritius is not a fit place to detain European people, and that an evacuation is necessary.

15 Gloucester Walk, — L. B. NAMIER
London, W.8.

PAYMENT OF DOMESTIC SERVANTS

SIR,—How would it be if Harold J. Laski took second thoughts on his statement, "There is no doubt domestic service remains the most sweated industry in Britain."

It would be quite possible to find hundreds of thousands of people who would not only question this but absolutely deny it. If I am correct there is great doubt. I know a girl of 15 who rises at 7 a.m. She has at least three hours daily in which to do anything she wishes for herself. She can retire to bed any time she pleases, 8 p.m. or later. She has two afternoons and evenings each week. Her wages are 15s. weekly. In addition she is getting a first-class domestic training far better than in her own home. This, of course, is but one instance, but I know of twenty others in very good similar posts with more experience getting 20s. to 40s. weekly. What about girls in potteries or restaurants or multiple stores or shops? G. HORSLEY
11 Deepdale Avenue,
Scarborough.

SOCIALIST EDUCATION

SIR,—I have never considered it necessary to reply to Mr. J. P. M. Millar's attacks on the W.E.A.—first, because mud-slinging and misrepresentation is the last occupation in which anyone claiming to be an educationalist should be engaged, and, second because the W.E.A., as the only serious workers' educational movement, is content to be judged on its forty years *actual* service to the working-class movement. E. GREEN,
38a St. George's Drive, General Secretary.
Victoria, London, S.W.1.

PLANS FOR LONDON

SIR,—Mr. Lewis Silkin's letter ("Flats or Houses"), while sincere and responsible, approaches the London problem as if there were no thought of wide-scale planning. His point 2 simply and clearly states the municipal difficulty; that in an overgrown and congested city you can't provide for people houses with adequate space within reasonable distance of their work. The Barlow Royal Commission gave the only possible solution: national guidance of location of industry, and the moving-out of some of London's work as well as of some of its people. Mr. Silkin is in an equally pre-war state of perplexity about the land-values obstacle to planning; he shows no consciousness of the proposals of the Uthwatt Report, which are addressed to this problem. Instead, he casts doubts on the validity of the expressed desires of 90 per cent. of the people who are to be housed; they don't really dislike flats, they only think they do. But careful reading of his letter shows that he is doubtful of his own doubts. Otherwise, where is the "dilemma" to which he refers? If dwellings at 40 or 50 to the acre are really all right, why the plea of dire necessity through shortage of space and high land values? F. J. OSBORN
16 Guessens Road,
Welwyn Garden City,
Herts.

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

The Way of All Flesh is one of the time-bombs of literature. One thinks of it lying in Butler's desk at Clifford's Inn for thirty years, waiting to blow up the Victorian family and with it the whole great pillared and balustraded edifice of the Victorian novel. The book Thackeray failed to write in *Pendennis* had at last been written. After Butler we look back upon a scene of devastation. A spiritual slum has been cleared. yet one is not entirely heartened. Was that the drawing room where mamma day-dreamed about marrying off her daughters to the school friends of her sons? Was that the fireplace where papa warmed the seat of his trousers and worked up the doctrine of divine inertia? Did guilty sons go up those stairs? Did catty sisters hiss from those landings and aunts conduct their warfare of headaches and slammed drawers in those upper rooms? Yes, says Samuel Butler, this was Heartbreak House. Not all agreed with him. Butler writes to Miss Savage in 1883 when the book was circulating in manuscript: "Mr. Heatherley said I had taken all the tenderest feelings of our nature and, having spread them carefully on the floor, stamped upon them till I had reduced them to an indistinguishable mass of filth, and then handed them round for inspection." I think it must be agreed that at least Butler spread them on the floor. Now that the floor has collapsed twice in a generation we begin to wonder whether it is still the best place for them; whether Norman Douglas was not right when he said, in *South Wind*, that Butler lacked the male attributes of humility, reverence and sense of proportion?

As Irish life runs to secret societies so English life seems to run naturally to parricide movements. In the middle class we are a nation of father-haters. *The Way of All Flesh* assuaged a thirst which, one supposes, begins with the law of primogeniture and the disinheritance of younger sons. In the working class which so commonly has to support its parents in their old age, the obsession is noticeably rare. You want to bite only the hand that feeds you. But one has only to compare the quarrels of fathers and sons in, say, the eighteenth century theatre, with Butler's development of the theme, to see a private struggle turning into a national disease. The thunder of the eighteenth-century father as he is helped out of the coach towards the trembling figure of a young scapegrace who has rejected one heiress in order to abduct another and prettier one, comes from a Jupiter inflamed, by the generosity of Nature, with biological authority and the gout. The eighteenth-century father is a pagan bursting a blood vessel in the ripeness of time; the nineteenth-century father is a Jehovah dictating an inexhaustible Deuteronomy. Money, as Butler saw, makes the difference. Money, in the nineteenth-century sense, did not exist in the eighteenth century. There is Fortune, not money, the speculator's goddess, pouring out plenty from the South Sea bubbles and the slave trade. Sacks of gold descend from heaven as if by divine parachute, and are stored in the gloating caves, and trade is still spacious and piratical. How different is the nineteenth century. Economics appears as a science. With the rise of industrialism, Fortune has given place to cash, cash has become Consols and debentures. Investment does not float down from on high. It seaps in, it is secreted, it accumulates. Its accumulation gives birth to moral laws, and these moral laws have a divine sanction. Investment is a token of energy and a huge will to power and the fathers who exerted this will expected their families to run like the machines which were making their money.

The Way of All Flesh struck this system at its most vulnerable points: its sentiment, its priesthood and their myth. Butler ignored questions of justice and went for the enfeeblement of religious life and the paralysis which crept upon the emotions. The Musical Banks of *Erewhon* pour out a useless coinage; and when Ernest Pontifex kneels in prayer he fails to save either the souls of the poor, who have no time for him, or his own investments. He is useless to God and Mammon, and to offend Mammon is as serious, for Butler, as to offend God. But what Butler really opposed to Victorianism was not the sort of responsibility we would oppose to it; Butler opposed a system and its myth not with another system but with the claims of human personality. Against Victorianism he placed himself; himself with both feet on the ground, telescope to blind eye and in perverse self-possession, against people whose dreary will to power—and whose hold on spiritual and material property as well—had dried the sap of sense and life.

We cannot think of Butler without the Butleriana. We always come back to Butler as a man. We come back to the undigested slice of rebel egotism. Full of theories himself, he is constantly leaving the ranks of the theorists and joining the amateur ranks of the human beings. George Eliot may be all very fine, but he has bought a dictionary in order to read *Daniel Deronda* in the original. He is the fighting suburban. Now this is not nineteenth century at all. To start with, there is no ambition in it; and the more one thinks of him and his failure to fit in, the more one feels he is not a prophet, or at any rate not the prophet of Mr. Shaw's invention. On the contrary, he is a sport or throwback. He looks more and more like a throwback to the eighteenth century. His science—with its affection for Buffon—smacks of it. That science, one suspects, is a rather literary science. His literary antecedents suggest the eighteenth century, too. *The Way of All Flesh* by its egocentricity, its very flatness and discursiveness, calls to mind the autobiographies of the eighteenth century, things like the Autobiography of Gibbon.

The genius of that age was to display a man to the full and yet to contain him within some intellectual assumption. The worldliness, the curiosity, the plainness, the tolerance, the irony, the comeliness of the eighteenth century (when it was not sitting formally at the spinet) are qualities which *The Way of All Flesh* revives. Not wholly so, for he was kicking irritably against the pricks; but he leapfrogs over the backs of the Victorians to alight beside the author of *Jonathan Wild* and *Amelia*—where Fielding was especially concerned with the moral and financial illusions of the virtuous. Butler would be at home in the cudgelling matches of Johnson or in Swift's dry and blasting utterance of half truths. *Erewhon* is a straight descendant of *Gulliver*—a poorer book because it lacks savagery and the sublime, plain figure of *Gulliver* himself—and is no fellow to a book like *The Dream of John Ball*. Where, but in Swift or Fielding, shall we find the suave parallel to this passage from *The Way of All Flesh*:

> "It seems to me," he continued, "that the family is a survival of the principle which is more logically embodied in the compound animal—and the compound animal is a form of life which has been found incompatible with high development. I would do with the family among mankind what nature has done with the compound animal, and confine it to the lower and less progressive races. Certainly there is no inherent love for the family system on the part of nature herself. Poll the forms of life and you will find it in a ridiculously small minority. The fishes know it not and they get along quite nicely. The ants and the bees, who far outnumber man, sting their fathers to death as a matter of course, and are given to the atrocious mutilation of nine-tenths of the offspring committed to their care, yet where shall we find communities more universally respected? Take the cuckoo again—is there any bird which we like better?"

Shooting out his hatreds and his contradictions, taking back his hatreds with laughter, begging us, like Montaigne, to get our dying done as we go along, Butler is certainly an attempt at a rotund man, even though we know that the commonsense view of life is a refuge of the injured and the timid, and is next door to the conventional.

One's criticism is that the priggishness rather than the roundness gets into the characters of *The Way of All Flesh*. We must except Butler's working-class characters, those collector's pieces, like Mrs. Jupp, the landladies, charladies and servants. A novelist picks those up as he goes along. It is the great weakness of *The Way of All Flesh* that the characters are dwarfed and burned dry by Butler's argument. They are often very tedious. He chose them for their mediocrity and then accused them of it. They can't stand up to his tweakings. Here Miss Savage was a sound critic when she pointed out the dangers of his special pleading; and although one can feel the years ripening the book, one ends with the feeling that Ernest Pontifex does not amount to much. Why should he come into his fortune? Merely that the unrighteous should have their reward? One does not feel that Ernest has very deeply developed because of suffering or fortune. He has escaped only. And he seems rather lost without his enemy. The weakness is that Butler is doing all the talking. There is no contradictory principle. Ultimately the defence of orthodoxy, even an orthodoxy as dim as Theobald's, is passion. The strange thing is that Ernest does not give us the impression of a man who enjoys himself, and he sounds like a man whose hedonism is a prig's hygiene. He looks like becoming the average bachelor of the room marked Residents Only.

One would give anything to have met Butler. For Ernest, Butler's shadow, one cares very little. Unlike Butler he does not act; because of the necessities of the book he is acted upon. His indiscretions are passive. He has no sins; he has merely follies.

Still, Butler made more of a hand of self-portraiture in this reminiscence than Thackeray made of Arthur Pendennis and Butler seems to have learned from Thackeray's disquisitional method These two misfit novelists, born 100 years too late, have many things in common. Christina is another Amelia from the latter pages of *Vanity Fair*, but filled out with richer comic truth. Her ruthless daydreams are wonderful, her play-acting diplomacy is observed with wicked affection. She is one of those women whose right breast never lets on what the left breast is feeling. We are given the great Jekyll and Hyde masquerade of the female bosom:

> As regards Ernest, the suspicions which had already crossed her mind were deepened, but she thought it better to leave the matter where it was. At present she was in a very strong position. Ernest's official purity was firmly established, but at the same time he had shown himself so susceptible that she was able to fuse two contradictory impressions concerning him into a single idea and consider him as a kind of Joseph and Don Juan in one. This was what she had wanted all along, but her vanity being gratified by the possession of such a son, there was an end of it; the son himself was naught.

"The matter" she was "leaving," as the reader will remember, was a maternal plot to make him betray his friends. The paragraph goes on just as penetratingly into the male version of this kind of humbug:

> "No doubt if John had not interfered Ernest would have had to expiate his offence with ache, penury and imprisonment. As it was the boy was 'to consider himself' as undergoing these punishments. . . ."

One is made to feel the pathos of human jealousies, hatreds and humbug. One is tricked into forgetting their inevitability. Butler believed that living, like money, should be in the foreground of human life and not an anxiety in its background. He hated the efficient mechanic doctrine, the mechanistic science and (as one sees in *Erewhon*) the machine with its stereotyped response. He pitied the conscious Ernest who toes the line and tried to inflame in Ernest the healthy sabotage of the unconscious. What, strangely enough, Butler failed to find, in this early introduction of the unconscious into English fiction, was the passion. It was odd, going to the unconscious and finding chiefly—common sense!

V. S. PRITCHETT

THE DRAGON CHANGES HIS SKIN

Little China. The Annamese Lands. By ALAN HOUGHTON BRODRICK. *Oxford University Press.* 18*s.*

China, But Not Cathay. By HSIAO CH'IEN. *Pilot Press.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

A Short History of Chinese Civilisation. By TSUI CHI. *Gollancz.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

The most interesting passages in *Little China* are descriptions of royal Annamese ceremonies, the Sacrifice to Heaven, and the rites of kingly burial, which are still carried out according to the imperial Chinese tradition. These are clearer than the rest of the book which, as a whole, is extremely muddling. For instance, it has several accounts, all of a sandy aridity, of the present reigning dynasty of Annam, but none of its relationship to the French imperial government. Nor is there any attempt to estimate what powers are exercised respectively by the French bureaucracy and the mandarinate, nor whether this system of partially indirect rule is as disruptive as it is reputed to be. A great deal of discussion of this South-Eastern corner of Asia as a racial melting-pot is rendered confusing by the absence of a systematic account, or map, of national distribution. The different peoples—the hill tribes especially—are dragged in higgledy-piggledy apropos of places Mr. Brodrick visits. He includes numerous snippets which he seems to regard as anthropology, but which read rather as smirking *erotica* of European gossip. His method is to describe the country as seen from a train, and that so flatly as to make a *Guide Bleu* seem lyrically pictorial. There is no account of Angkor Wat or the Khmer buildings, and what there is about the Cham sculpture would be meaningless but for a solitary photograph. The author is a pelmaniser; if he writes a word which recalls some totally irrelevant fact to his mind he pulls it in, so that his book gets more and more like a mouse's nest as it goes on. It is a pity, for a good English work on Indochina is badly needed.

China but not Cathay is straight propaganda, well and pleasantly done. It will be especially good for older school children. It has quantities of excellent photographs. The Chinese are highly photogenic, partly because of their characteristic facial planes, partly because of the simplicity of their dress. Notable among them are a fine-drawn peasant guerilla, an airman with that detached gaze which marks his fellows the world over, and gay, wiry children. Impartially, there is General Chiang Kai-shek, the Communist leader Chow En-lai, Madam Chiang Kai-shek and her Red sister Madam Sun Yat-sen. The text is a series of sketches of China at work and at war. They are simple, perhaps in some cases like the account of industry rather slight, but they are written very well, with the infectious emotion of a patriot conscious of his country's great past and in love with her greater future.

The best, last. Mr. Tsui Chi writes lively English. As a historian he reminds me of John Richard Green: and that is meant for praise. There is the same romantic and moral view to string the innumerable links of history into a chain. The Chinese historian is a nationalist and a democrat: he believes in a China governed by her own people, dominated neither by Communism, nor by Imperialism, nor by Japan. He writes in the light of the conviction that Chinese civilisation changes, as the Yellow River shifts its bed, but that the Chinese people remain, like the soil of the great plains. He does not claim Pekin Man as the national ancestor, quite: but a dynastic tradition going back to 2700 B.C., and a written language historically dated from 1750 B.C. are of a respectable antiquity. Tsui Chi wisely includes the folk-tales of that early age, for they are entertaining and enlightening too. There are legends of demigods who taught the people to plough and weave silk, and to dyke the flooding rivers; and it is in character that their hero was no Hercules performing feats of derring-do, but Prince Millet who fed the people. Tsui Chi sees that period and its successors as a constant interaction of Chinese civilisation, settled and agricultural, developing to wealth and decadence, and the pastoral military tribalism of Central and Northern Asia encroaching in the plains whenever China weakened—aggression in modern times coming from Japan and Europe too. This makes the greater part of his story a tale of wars. One loses the sense of China as an enormous peaceful Empire, as for long periods it was, because of this flux and reflux. Yet the author recounts the wars because of their effect on culture; the ordered morality of Confucius over against the mystic anarchism of Lao Tse, the stylised etiquette of the courts contrasting with contemplative Buddhism and the nay-saying poets, winds of thought and belief blowing along the Silk Road to the Chinese people.

Here, just for fun, I will quote a tale of the nonconformist Yuan Chi, describing as it were the Conservative Party Conference as viewed from the sixth century A.D.

> A man wrote a letter to a Philosopher in which he declared, "There is none in this world of more worth than your perfect gentleman who dresses with propriety, looks about him with propriety, talks and behaves with propriety." The Philosopher heaved a deep sigh and replied to the man from his high and remote seat, "Have you ever heard of the lice that live in trousers? The louse takes sanctuary in the depths of the seams, and makes a home for itself in ragged cotton, thinking itself wonderfully lucky. When it takes a walk, it carefully creeps to the edge of the seam, and when it moves about, it never ventures beyond the confines of the seat and believes it is behaving with proper etiquette. When it is hungry it feeds on flesh and is confident it can never starve. But when the trousers are taken to be boiled and pressed, the towns and cities of the lice are scorched and destroyed. It dies with all its tribe in the trousers, unable to escape. Is not your perfect gentleman who confines himself to the visible world like the lice who would live for ever in the trousers?"

There are two obvious criticisms to make. The first is that the political history rather squeezes out the life of the people; in especial an account of their standards of living, methods of cultivation and industry, ideas and arts. The second is that in the modern part the author is too slapdash and partisan. For instance, he is unfair as between the parts played in China by Britain and the United States. The commerce of both nations greedily exploited the Chinese market: there wasn't a string of cash to choose between them. If the State offered battleships to stop Japan in 1931 the event is unknown in Britain. And Tsui Chi cannot have read the Lytton Report, since he thinks it pro-Japanese. All Sir John Simon's forensic skill could only extract two pro-Japanese passages out of it, and one of these, by omission, misquoted. Historical partisanship is salt in the bowl, but inaccuracy is a hair in the soup: Mr. Tsui Chi, I trust, will correct these blemishes in future editions of his work.

FREDA WHITE

FUN AND POETRY

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Chatto

minister burbles an introduction, all sorts of fun merchants rush to be quoted in commendation. "The most comic poet of all comic poets alive" is our introduction to the author of *The Face is Familiar*, and on the back cover, under tributes from rival publishers, we find Mr. Victor Gollancz exclaiming "I adore Ogden Nash." How nice, how very nice, for Mr. Nash, to be the adored of Mr. Gollancz! Is it mutual, one wonders, and will Mr. Gollancz's next pamphlet on Vansittartism bear a declaration from Mr. Nash, "Victor is my honey-bun"? The comic claque may enlarge circulation, but it tends to kill fun; humour, like violets, should be half-hidden by mossy stones. However, even after being told to have my laughs ready, I found Ogden Nash funny.

He is not wildly but neatly funny. His brevities give an exact noggin:

> The cow is of the bovine ilk;
> One end is moo, the other, milk.

Many of the epigrams are about animals. Which should one quote? The turtle, smug counterpart of Lawrence's agonised tortoise:

> The turtle lives 'twixt plated decks
> Which practically conceal its sex.
> I think it clever of the turtle
> In such a fix to be so fertile.

What we all think. And one can only agree that

> Candy
> Is dandy
> But liquor
> Is quicker.

While readers of detective stories will be grateful, I should think, for this word.

> Philo Vance
> Needs a kick in the pance.

These examples of Mr. Nash at his briefest place him where he belongs—with, and after, Belloc and Bentley. The half-clerihew, the clerihew blown up an enormous size with lines of varying length, the limerick, the cautionary tale, the Gilbertian lyric, the prim epigram: he does them all stylishly, and his own contribution is an occasional preposterous rhyme and the American background of domesticity. He gives poignant details of family life, sometimes sarcastic, but often (despite the sharpness) with a nostalgia for childhood. "Seaside Serenade," written presumably out of season, is delightful:

> It begins when you smell a funny smell
> And it isn't vanilla or caramel,
> And it isn't forget-me-nots or lilies,
> Or new-mown hay, or daffy-down-dillies,
> And it's not what the barber rubs on father,
> And it's awful, and yet you like it rather.
> No, it's not what the barber rubs on Daddy,
> It's more like an elderly finnan haddie,
> Or, shall we say, an electric fan
> Blowing over a sardine can.
> It smells of seasweed, it smells of clams,
> It's as fishy as first-night telegrams,
> It's as fishy as millions of fishy fishes,
> In spite of which you find it delishes,
> You could do with a second helping, please,
> And that, my dears, is the ocean breeze.

Not nonsense, in fact, but squirrel sense (with more than a dash of sentiment) is Mr. Nash's line. He makes delicious fun of American habits, English reserve, husbands, babies, animals and writers of comic verse. It was with something of a shock that I found so intelligent a critic of affairs devoting a page to finding excuses for the unspeakable Mr. Winchell. Possibly the defence is ironical, but I doubt it.

The one quality lacking in *The Face is Familiar*—imagination—is Miss Stevie Smith's trump card. Imagination, in her case, is a mixture of intuition, wish, and the peculiar fun that springs from self-pity and self-mockery. Where Mr. Nash serves up a verse like a cold trout with trimmings, Miss Smith sends a fishy something wriggling across and off the page. Either in her drawings or her verses, and sometimes in both, she lets out a strain of whimsical poetry.

> There is a face I know too well,
> A face I dread to see,
> So vain it is, so eloquent
> Of all futility.
>
> It is a human face that hides
> A monkey soul within,
> That bangs about, that beats a gong,
> That makes a horrid din.
>
> Sometimes the monkey soul will sprawl
> Athwart the human for eyes,
> And peering forth, will flesh its pads,
> And utter social lies.
>
> So wretched is this face, so vain,
> So empty and forlorn,
> You may well say that better far
> This face had not been born.

This is one of her best poems, and the tiny drawing of an egg-shaped head on an egg-shaped body unexpectedly completes the satire. Sad and funny, sad and sad, sad and silly, just silly, are the prevailing moods. I am not sure quite how much I get from *Mother, What is Man?* or indeed any of Stevie Smith's books of verse. The "lightness" of her method does not conceal a deep admiration of Blake and D. H. Lawrence. She is not a professional expert like Mr. Nash, but she can deviate from verse into poetry, which he can't. And there's a charming catty streak:

> Girls! although I am a woman
> I always try to appear human.
>
> Unlike Miss So-and-so whose greatest pride
> Is to remain always in the VI Form and not let down the side
>
> Do not sell the pass, dear, don't let down the side,
> That is what this woman said and a lot of balsy stuff beside—
> (Oh, the awful balsy nonsense that this woman cried.)
>
> Girls! I will let down the side if I get a chance
> And I will sell the pass for a couple of pence.

The chief advance on her earlier books seems to me in the illustrations which often diverge from the text. The drawings for "Autumn," "Where are You Going?", "Study to Deserve Death," "If I Lie Down," and "Ah, Will the Saviour?" are a perfect blend of grace and incongruity.

G. W. STONIER

A PERSONAL RECORD

Malayan Postscript. By IAN MORRISON. *Faber and Faber.* 8s. 6d.

Malayan Postscript will be read by two sorts of people—those who know Malaya well and those who do not. Both groups will find in it a vivid picture of events, offered for what it is worth, by a first-hand observer who shows himself well aware that in acting as our guide he has severe limitations. He was a newcomer to Malaya and is still without access to military secrets which we should all like to know. Here will be found none of the missing pieces of this most maddening of jig-saw puzzles: Mr. Morrison adds only speculation or gossip to what the official communiqués and war correspondents' despatches of the period have already told the student of the campaign. Those who know Malaya will find many things in his book which will prompt them to discount his judgments, even while admitting that they are modestly put forward. It is difficult, moreover, to escape being irritated by the patent inadequacy of his knowledge of either the terrain or the standing problems of Malaya, and also by opinions which naively reflect the *obita dicta* of the club bar. For example, his "private theory" of the adverse effect upon the men of the arrival in the tropics of the white woman is certainly as public as it is hoary.

Old Malaya hands can be trusted, however, to discriminate for themselves. Those who do not know Malaya and who followed the communiqués and despatches without an understanding of the background will be well advised to remember that this book is, in Mr. Morrison's own words, "a short personal record," and no more. His "after thoughts" particularly will otherwise mislead them.

It is difficult to see how under any system the natural resources of Malaya "could be made more freely and justly available to the nations that need them" than they were before the war. The products of Malaya were sold in the open market. By no means all of the estates and mines were owned by British interests, and the iron mines were leased to the Japanese. The statement that "the profits from the rubber and the tin found their way chiefly into the pockets of shareholders in England, not into the pockets of the planters and mining engineers" may be true, but it would be wrong for the reader to infer that little or nothing of the profits went back into the country for the development and improvement of the social services in which Malaya led our overseas dependencies. Again, writing of the bombing of the docks, Mr. Morrison says, "Tamil coolies preferred to stay at home in safety rather than to risk their lives for what was after all an infinitesimal wage." People with experience of Tamil coolies would probably hold a different view of why these dock labourers stayed away from work, but it should in any case be known that the wages and conditions of Indian labour in Malaya were agreed between the Malayan and Indian Governments, and that the latter exercised a strict control. Tamil labour was, indeed, much better off in Malaya than at home—a fact well recognised in India.

It is a pity, I think, that Mr. Morrison, himself admittedly uncertain as to the facts, should leave us with the impression that the European staff of the hospital in Kuala Lumpur deserted their patients to save their own skins. "I cannot help feeling," writes Mr. Morrison, "that a doctor's duty to his patients is so great that he ought to stay with them no matter what orders he receives." *I* cannot help feeling that this was an occasion when Mr. Morrison did not succeed in following his own precept, stated on the page that follows that "the important thing" (in reporting) "is that the *striving* for accuracy should be there, and that one's mind should be free of those things that make for inaccuracy."

Malayan Postscript is, then, a book to be read with reservations, but still a book to be read. At the least it may be expected to increase in its readers a demand for the full story after the war, and may even help to increase the public interested in the reconstruction of an area that is not likely to become less important than it formerly was.

E. ROWAN DAVIES

COUNTRY MINDS

The English Countryman. By H. J. MASSINGHAM. *Batsford.* 15s.

Field Fellowship. By H. J. MASSINGHAM. *Chapman and Hall.* 8s. 6d.

Southern English. By ERIC BENFIELD. *Eyre and Spottiswoode.* 10s. 6d.

Jack by the Hedge. By NANCY PRICE. *Muller.* 7s. 6d.

Forgetfulness that the English are in their depths a rural, not an urban, people has, in Mr. Massingham's opinion, based on years of study of their more durable characteristics, sadly misled us in the guidance and control of our destinies. The chief purpose of *The English Countryman* is to show what we have lost through taking a wrong road, and to convince us that it is even now possible to turn back and to follow the right one, marked out for us by our great rural traditions. The times are propitious for such a step. We have become conscious of all the crimes committed in the name of progress, and are beginning to distrust it as an illusion, to doubt whether we have really advanced at all. A sign of this is that the attitude of the present to the past is far less contemptuous than it was before the war. True, Mr. Massingham quotes a passage from a recent "authoritative book" which would not seem to support me. "No sacrifice can be too great to check the black plague (Nazism) that would set us back to the 13th century." But I believe the majority of people who read this astounding sentence will smile at the implication that the age which perfected the guild system and created the Early English style of architecture was more barbarous than our own.

It is hard to write succinctly, my obligation, about a book on such a grand scale as this *magnum opus* of Mr. Massingham's. It gives a

poor idea of the richness of its thematic material to say that it is divided into sections, each describing in detail the basic types of the English countryman who built up the rural heritage which fell into ruins after the Industrial Revolution. For the studies of these types, the Peasant, the Yeoman, the Craftsman, the Labourer, the Squire, the Parson, and the Tenant Farmer, are set against an historical, literary, social, and agricultural background of great complexity. The huge canvas completed, Mr. Massingham expounds the lesson to be drawn from it. All the figures represented have their part to play not only in a regenerated agriculture, but in an England dependent on it, an England "redeemed from the money-power." From the remnants of the old heritage it is claimed that a new one could be created. The book, beautifully produced by Batsford with scores of illustrations, prints, drawings, paintings, and photographs, is by no means easy reading. I think that is partly because Mr. Massingham has tried to pack more into it than any one book can hold. But the uncouth style and the numerous misprints give trouble. While he was at work on it he continued to contribute country notes on a variety of subjects to weekly journals, and it is from them that the volume of essays, which he prefers to call pieces, published under the title *Field Fellowship* is derived. Whatever the subject of the "piece," Hudson, country architecture, mills, chairs, hurdles, gardens, the treatment of it is always doctrinaire. It seems impossible for Mr. Massingham to write anything without railing at the modern theory of progress. In the "piece" about Shakespeare his animosity to urban life and urban influences leads him into exaggeration of Shakespeare's country-mindedness. "This Everest among the hills of the world belongs to us country-folk, not to the town: and to the town which has wrought such destruction upon the world he belonged no more in heart than he did in blood."

In Southern English, Eric Benfield tells the story of his youth in the Purbeck country, where he was born and bred and worked for many years as a quarryman, the hereditary calling of his family. Later he developed into a sculptor. There is far too much facetious cackle in his reminiscences. He begins well with a description of his native isle and the three types of people—farmers, heath-croppers, and quarrymen—who inhabit it, but there is little after that on a par with the illustrations by Denys Watkins-Pitchford, who runs away with the chief honours.

Miss Nancy Price tells us in her preface that she is a vagabond not only at heart but by profession. She quotes Statute 39 Eliz. (1597-80) as a proof that this is not a joke. But does the Statute really stigmatise all players, whatever their rank, as "rogues and vagabonds"? Not at all. It was only the "common players of enterlude and minstrels wandering abroad" who were to be "taken, adjudged and deemed Rogues, Vagabonds and Sturdy Beggars." So Miss Price does not come under the Act as a player, though she might as a vagrant. She spends her time when she is "resting"—the player's euphemism for being unemployed—tramping the roads. Her genuine country-mindedness is manifest in her last book, *Jack By The Hedge*, a collection of sketches of people she has met and things she has seen on highways and byways. Petulengro, who contributes the preface, picks out "Rest Harrow" for special praise. It was the rest harrow, or wrest-harrow, as it should be spelt to indicate that it was given that name because its tough root wrested the harrow from its course, which set Miss Price meditating on the aptness and loveliness of the country names for flowers. She gives a list of the ones which rang through her head when she was stretched on the verge on a summer's day, and it reads like a poem.

CHRISTOPHER ST. JOHN

HOW IT STRIKES A CONTEMPORARY

A French Officer's Diary. By D. BARLONE. *Cambridge University Press.* 7s. 6d.

Here is an unassuming, straightforward, sincere book about France! Not another attempt to explain her "tragedy," but a plain record of events as seen by a reserve captain, called up on August 23rd, 1939, to fight once more against his country's enemy. Placed at the head of a company of horse transport in the 2nd North African Division, first behind, then in front of, the Maginot Line, he is later stationed on the Belgian border, marches into Belgium and back again into France, reaches Dunkirk and is taken to England, only to sail again at once for Cherbourg and to finish the campaign in a motor transport depot in south-western France. Then begins his escape via Marseilles, Oran and Casablanca; the diary ends on his arrival on British soil on October 1st, 1940.

The book, in spite of some rather stilted phrases, is well translated and reads agreeably. It will help Englishmen to understand not so much what happened to France as what Frenchmen thought and felt during events which others have prematurely sought to analyse. The casual jottings of a captain who makes no claim to special knowledge provide neither a synthetic interpretation of events nor a final judgment on men or institutions; indeed they do not pretend to do so, and M. Barlone places his notes in exactly the right perspective when he says that "they give some idea of my own reactions and those of people around me." He readily admits that some of the opinions he has set down on the spur of the moment have proved erroneous in the light of later events. His indictment of the French High Command is none the less formidable, and his vindication of the common Frenchman none the less convincing. The pages of his diary show the annoyance, at first subdued, then growling, of all ranks with a hesitant, inefficient High Command and a disconcerting Government, not even capable of applying the lessons of the last war either in battle or on the home front. Incapacity in high places was apt to encourage disruptive sentiments such as these: "If a clean-up is wanted, let them call upon us, and it will be done quickly" (November 20th, 1939)—that is to say, to foster the idea that soldiers, or ex-soldiers, as such, are better able than civilians to tackle the complex problems of Government. Even the author occasionally shows signs of the mystical belief in the infallibility of military rule which was the essence of the anti-Dreyfus agitation, of Boulangisme and of Pétainisme.

Yet he is surprised when some of the more violent officers "go so far as to ask for divisions from the front to march on Paris and put a general at the head of a real War Cabinet. The Politicians, they say, are responsible for the war (for Hitler would never have dared to do what he has done if France had been strong)" (March 22nd, 1940); and M. Barlone's common sense soon comes uppermost, thanks to his contacts with his men: if at the end of June, 1940, he finds "the idea of a dictatorship in France, for the moment at least," present in the minds of both officers and men, and if every one of his soldiers is ready to express "disgust for the parliamentary régime," he notes that "these people express their thoughts inadequately. Being sincerely democratic they feel that democracy has been distorted by the misuse of the last thirty to forty years of our parliamentary government, they are so profoundly attached to the Republic, so accustomed to make use of their deputy, that when they return home they will write to him for a grant of money to rebuild their houses or in order to get a job on the railways.

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It is therefore the form of democracy which must be modified." The conviction that France was sound at heart leads him to this conclusion : " Our virtues and our culture, which only twenty years ago proved so strong and full of life, have not been killed by a mere handful of politicians. Amongst our Deputies and Senators there were quite a lot of honest people, but the wrong application of the parliamentary system paralysed their good intentions. Rebuild the Republic ; that is the post-war programme. Fundamentally the people are all right. I know them too well, our soldiers, peasants, workers and middle-class shopkeepers. I know that the country has not changed. They are the true face of France, and as soon as the enemy shows signs of weakness all of them will rush to attack him, to drive him out of France, with the same frenzy as of twenty years ago."

JEROME JENATTON

POETRY AND THE PEOPLE

Mayakovsky and His Poetry, compiled by HERBERT MARSHALL. *Pilot Press.* 2*s.* 6*d.*
Dispersal Point and Other Air Poems. By JOHN PUDNEY. *Lane.* 2*s.* 6*d.*

A revolutionary writer's success should not be judged only by his contemporary popularity, and Vladimir Mayakovsky, who was admired by Lenin and of whom Stalin has written " he is the best and most talented poet of the Soviet epoch," is as much read and appreciated in Russia to-day as he was when he died in 1930 at the height of his fame as a poet, lecturer and artist. Translations of his verse, if as competent as this present selection by Herbert Marshall, Paddy Breslin and others, should assure him a permanent place as one of the world's most striking revolutionary poets. His poetry and that of John Pudney (at present serving with the R.A.F.) have in common a directness, forcefulness and simplicity of expression comparable to that of the folk-poem. In them one is constantly reminded of the Orange and Green Songs. Both poets are in earnest, both have something to say and say it with a freshness of image and complete absence of cliché which leaves no feeling of monotony despite the fact that each confines himself to one subject. With Mayakovsky it is the class struggle, and there is no doubt about his attitude :

> I don't believe in a flowery Nice !
> I sing once again
> men as crumpled as hospital beds,
> and women as trite as a proverb.

The long poem, *Vladimir Ilyich Lenin* (1924), of which only the first and last parts are translated here, is perhaps the most moving of this selection and contains some of his best descriptive writing. There is the scene of Lenin's funeral, for instance, when

> Nights are afloat on the backs of the days,
> mixing up hours, confusing the dates.
> As if it weren't night, no shining star rays,
> but weeping over Lenin, are Negroes from the States.
>
> Frost unprecedented burnt one's very soles.
> Yet people stood waiting all day in that press.
> And everyone refrained, despite the cold,
> from even beating their hands—no, not in place.
> The frost seizes hold, and hauls us, as if
> it is testing how strong our love's tempered . . .

With no knowledge of Russian, I cannot pass judgment on the translation as such, but it is evident that these poems carry with them into English more than a little of the splendid energy, insistance and fierceness of the original.

John Pudney's background is the R.A.F., and against it " Tom, Dick and Harry, plain names and numbers, Pilot, observer and gunner . . ." Many of these short songs are already known to *News Chronicle* readers, who will be pleased to see them published in book form. Their easy-to-read simplicity should not hide the fact that they are among the most vigorous poems so far produced by this war, and in them Mr. Pudney brings out very effectively all the nervous tension, the unreality and the essential loneliness of an airman's life. He has also two warnings for those at home who are planning the post-war paradise, and we must not forget them :

> Men find a cause to die for : and so chance to live,
> Humble in the blast, or in the lightning
> Royally assume the gait of heroes.
> Only when the firing squad about-turns ;
> The rescue party goes home ; the sailor home
> Hangs up his cap ; when airmen in careful creases queue
> At a manager's frosted door. Then all is lost . . .

and, from the poem *To Johnny* :

> Fetch out no shroud
> For Johnny-in-the-cloud ;
> And keep your tears
> For him in after years.
>
> Better by far
> For Johnny-the-bright-star,
> To keep your head,
> And see his children fed.

JOAN MAIR

EIGHT TO FIFTEEN

A Book of Ships. By LAURENCE DUNN and A. C. and M. J. HARDY. *Puffin Picture Books.* 9*d.*
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Nine Starlight Tales. } *Faber.* 3*s.* 6*d.* each.
The Pack of Pieces. By ANTHONY ARMSTRONG. *Joseph.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

" On and on and on with the story." The children must have books, and here they are in moderate quantity, with cheerful dust-covers and plenty of agreeable black-and-white illustrations.

Puffin Books have two new numbers, one on ships, one on architecture. Both are excellent, though the *Book of Ships* will have a wider appeal, with its pages of coloured flags and funnel markings, and diagrams of ships' insides. They will roll up and go into the top of a Christmas stocking.

There are not many animal books this year. *Raff, the Jungle Bird* (10-15), much to be recommended, is the true story of a talking Mynah, told by two naturalists who brought him home from the Malayan jungle, where they found him, a lonely fledgling in a deserted nest. Edward Shanks writes two mildly fantastic tales about an evacuated dachshund who patriotically insists upon rejoining her master and mistress in the danger zone. Amongst other adventures she meets the heroine of *Lady into Fox*, now comfortably settled, *en secondes noces*, with a fox. *Elizabeth Goes Home* will be a success with most children of 8 to 13.

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all belonging to what is evidently the dominant modern type—their theme is Practical Families. Here they are, the sturdy, freckled children in shorts and shirts, with their camping outfits, their first-aid boxes, and lists of groceries to be bought at the village shop, and the eternal password—"I say, it's frightfully decent of you"—with which they greet the friendly grown-up. They are so sensible and so reliable, these children; no nonsense about them (nor imagination neither); they never tell lies nor break their word, because "you didn't do that sort of thing." One cannot help sighing for the appallingly bad children, the school prigs, the quarrels and outbursts, the emotional tension, the striking plots, the jokes and nonsense of the children's books of the last generation. The crystallisation of so definite a type must express some current psychological and educational trend, and can hardly fail to make its mark on the minds of readers. "It's quite all right," the message seems to run, "there's nothing alarming or outlandish in the world, nothing, anyway, that a good clove hitch or an efficient tourniquet can't deal with. Only keep calm—and remember grown-ups are frightfully decent really." Well, one must make the best of them. You know where you are with M. E. Atkinson, and if *Challenge to Adventure* is slightly substandard, it will still rejoice the hearts of addicts. *Rick Afire*, by a new writer, is on the tame side. It describes life on a farm in a way to please a town child. Mrs. Pye's *Primrose Polly* has more humour than the rest, and her *dénouement* is more exciting. Her Price family are my favourites among the practical children. *Four's Company* centres round an arch little fantasy of a "thought-of" baby brother who is heard eerily laughing all over the house and garden, and even in the linen-cupboard, to pop at last into the cot in the nursery. Apart from this it is good.

Two adventure books of a different sort may be recommended. The *Grey Adventurer* (10 to 14) tells the story of a Roundhead boy who experiences the Plague and the Fire of London, emigrates to Carolina, is condemned to be hung at the yard-arm, and captured by Red Indians. An exciting story, well and plainly told. The little girl heroine of *Sailor in the Sun* (8 to 12) is forced to pass herself off as a boy. As such she learns to sail and build boats, while still cherishing a strong secret passion for her dolls. There are some excellent characters and a good plot in this delightful book, which comes from America. The scene of *Runaway Boy* is Ireland at the time of the Troubles (or "Crossness," as the old retainer describes it). It has a good picaresque story, and if any child (8 to 12) does not object to the wicked English playing the part of villains, nor to the sad ending, nor to the everlasting Irishisms and Celtic legend—och wirra, then it's himself will be after enjoying the book entirely.

Alison Uttley's two charming and cheap books of short stories are based on Nursery Rhymes. They are for rather younger children.

A word of warning about Anthony Armstrong's *Pack of Pieces*. There are fairies, witches, and princesses inside as well as out. But it is a fairy story not for children but for those frisky adults who used to split their sides over the illustrations to Fortnum and Mason's catalogue.

FRANCES BIRD

SHOOTING

The Shooting Week-End Book. By ERIC PARKER. *Seeley Service.* 10*s.*

Inevitably the shooting Week-End Book is more of a guide and less of an anthology than most. Shooting provokes the muse less readily than the chase proper. It has inspired no poet as good as Sommerville, Charles Kingsley or Masefield even—to say nothing of Shakespeare; and no novelist to match Surtees. Good Colonel Hawker is a poor exchange for Beckford, though we are grateful to him for a new way of dealing with poachers: "In order to be sure of keeping poachers out of your wood, you should mount a six-pounder cannon on the top of your house, and fire a few rounds of glass marbles and perforated clay balls into the wood by night, two or three times a week." "The perforated ball," he says, "would make a most terrible whizzing noise, and, together with the marbles buzzing about a fellow's ears, would make him think that the very devil was in the wood."

St. John is doubtless the best of those who have written about shooting, and one could wish the editor had made more use of him. Richard Jeffries hardly counts as a "shooting author," and Cobbett certainly does not, though the latter is put under contribution and the former might have been. "E. P.", whom I take to be the editor, when he can rid himself of the last rags of that Corinthian style dear to old-fashioned sporting journalists, contributes some of the best pages in the book, e.g. *Rabbiting with Beagles*. Also I am persuaded that he is a scholar at heart by the very faithful way in which he deals with Sir Ralph Payne-Gallway's editing of the Hawker diaries.

But the greater part of the book is devoted to instruction, and this might have been better done. For instance many people, besides inexperienced sportsmen, will be glad to learn how to tell a young partridge from an old. Why not teach them also to distinguish between young and old pheasants late in the season? Indeed, the chapter on the natural history of game birds and that on birds of prey are both rather careless. This is a pity, as they might have been of general interest. But it is pleasant to know that one should speak of "a paddling of ducks (when on the water)" and "a team" (when in the air). And, anyhow, this is a book which anyone who shoots will enjoy.

CLIVE BELL

DOCUMENTARIES

Front Line, 1940-41. *H.M. Stationery Office.* 2*s.*

Transport Goes to War. *H.M. Stationery Office.* 1*s.*

To publishers struggling with their paper quota and to authors who see their books go out of print after the first thousand, M.O.I. pamphlets like the above must be disturbing to the eye. Such lavishness was never known in peacetime; the illustrations of *Front Line*, 1940-1, and *Transport Goes to War*, are magnificently chosen and beautifully reproduced. Each book, in fact (the word pamphlet hardly seems to cover the 160 pages of the first) is a documentary that can be carried round on visits and in railway trains and switched on at odd moments. *Front Line*, 1940–1, dealing with the Blitz, is as good in its way as *London Can Take It*: late in the day, complete, full of precise detail and bits of personal story which make the lapse of time irrelevant. There is a remarkable account of blast by a man who survived being blown up. "The explosion made an indescribable noise—something like a colossal growl—and was accompanied by a veritable tornado of air blast. . . . The blast seemed to come in successive waves accompanied by vibrations from the ground. I felt as if it were trying to 'spin' me and tear me away from the kerb." Altogether, in a few seconds, he had received three hits from projectiles. There are other personal glimpses, as remarkable, of fire-fighting and A.R.P. and civilian work in London and the provincial towns. Cities, ports, arms towns, the countryside—we are told in exact figures what

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all of these suffered. This is the whole story, at last, strikingly illustrated and told.

Transport Goes to War deals with a general situation, but it, too, is exciting. The Blitz again smashes down, on railway sidings, bridges, docks, canals, arterial roads, and from the snapshots of raid interference we pass to the general picture of the country's transport working at war. How many of us looking out of our carriage window think of the passing goods train as anything but a slow and secondary movement on the line? The activities of dockland, of the canals, of night lorries are even more unheeded. For most readers *Transport Goes to War* will reveal in fascinating detail a world they have taken far too much for granted. The photographs, especially of Blitz scenes, are remarkable.

The texts of both pamphlets have been so admirably written that the names of the authors have been allowed to slip out through the chinks of M.O.I. austerity. Mr. S. C. Leslie is the author of *Front Line, 1940–1*, and Mr. V. S. Pritchett of *Transport Goes to War*.

BOOKS RECOMMENDED

It has been our custom to give a list of the books that during the year have been most strongly recommended in these columns. The reduction alike in the number of new books and in our own space makes it necessary this year to make the list very short. We have omitted a number of works the interest of which, however great, is chiefly topical. Readers, moreover, are warned that many of the books mentioned are out of print. This happens, indeed, so quickly that it would be misleading to place any distinguishing sign against those that are at the beginning of this week obtainable. But if one wants to give to a friend a book that the shop cannot provide, a book-token can be useful, for often what you want comes back into print. The main purpose of the list is to recall attention to books of permanent value, some of which may have been overlooked in the general rush towards topical books.

LOUIS ARAGON. *Le Crève-Coeur*. Horizon and La France Libre. 6s. 6d.
ED. R. N. ANSHEN. *Freedom: Its Meaning*. Allen and Unwin. 16s.
ED. K. C. BALDERSTONE. *Thraliana*. Oxford Press. 42s.
E. MOBERLY BELL. *Octavia Hill*. Constable. 15s.
RUTH BENEDICT. *Race and Racism*. Routledge. 7s. 6d.
ED. RAE BLANCHARD. *The Correspondence of Richard Steele*. Oxford Press. 35s.
ELIZABETH BOWEN. *Bowen's Court*. Longmans. 16s.
JEAN BURTON. *Sir Richard Burton's Wife*. Harrap. 12s. 6d.
MARY CARBERY. *Happy World*. Longmans. 12s. 6d.
SIR CECIL T. CARR. *Concerning English Administrative Law*. Oxford Press. 11s. 6d.
E. H. CARR. *Conditions of Peace*. Macmillan. 12s. 6d.
WALTER DE LA MARE. *Collected Poems*. Faber. 12s. 6d.
C. W. DE KIEWIET. *A History of South Africa*. Oxford Press. 15s.
S. DE MADARIAGA. *Hernan Cortes: Conqueror of Mexico*. Hodder and Stoughton. 21s.
ED. E. DE SELINCOURT. *The Journals of Dorothy Wordsworth*. Macmillan. 36s.
T. S. ELIOT. *Introducing James Joyce*. Faber. 3s. 6d.
H. I'ANSON FAUSSET. *Walt Whitman*. Cape. 12s. 6d.
MAX FRIEDLANDER. *On Art and Connoisseurship*. Cassirer. 21s.
W. GAUNT. *The Pre-Raphaelite Tragedy*. Cape. 10s. 6d.
GEOFFREY GRIGSON. *The Romantics* (anthology) Routledge. 10s. 6d.
T. R. GLOVER. *The Challenge of the Greek*. Cambridge Press. 12s. 6d.
JOSEPH C. HARSCH. *Pattern of Conquest*. Heinemann. 8s. 6d.
HERBERT HENSLEY HENSON. *Retrospect of an Unimportant Life*. Oxford Press. 16s.
JULIAN HUXLEY. *Evolution: the Modern Synthesis*. Allen and Unwin. 25s.
HAROLD INGRAMS. *Arabia and the Isles*. Murray. 18s.
J. LAVRIN. *An Introduction to the Russian Novel*. Methuen. 7s. 6d.
SIR TRESHAM LEVER. *The Life and Times of Sir Robert Peel*. Allen and Unwin. 12s. 6d.
PIERRE MAILLAUD. *France*. Oxford Press. 3s. 6d.
L. B. NAMIER. *Conflicts*. Macmillan. 8s. 6d.
BOWYER NICHOLS. *Words and Days*. Oxford Press. 5s.
SEAN O'CASEY. *Pictures in the Hallway*. Macmillan. 15s.
J. DOS PASSOS. *The Ground We Stand On*. Routledge. 18s.
HESKETH PEARSON. *Bernard Shaw*. Collins. 21s.
THE POLLOCK-HOLMES LETTERS. Cambridge. 36s.
ARTHUR PONSONBY. *Henry Ponsonby, Queen Victoria's Private Secretary*. Macmillan. 21s.
V. S. PRITCHETT. *In My Good Books*. Chatto and Windus. 7s. 6d.
MAURICE J. QUINLAN. *Victorian Prelude*. Oxford Press. 20s.
ED. J. M. RICHARDS. *The Bombed Buildings of Britain*. Architectural Press. 15s.
N. RIMSKY-KORSAKOV. *My Musical Life*. Secker and Warburg. 36s.
ED. MICHAEL ROBERTS. *The Faber Book of Modern Verse*. Faber. 8s. 6d.
LENNOX ROBINSON. *Curtain Up*. M. Joseph. 10s. 6d.
A. L. ROWSE. *A Cornish Childhood*. Cape. 12s. 6d.
EDITH SITWELL. *Street Songs*. Macmillan. 3s. 6d.
FREYA STARK. *Letters from Syria*. Murray. 9s.
STEPHEN SPENDER. *Ruins and Visions*. Faber. 6s.
E. E. STOLL. *Shakespeare and other Masters*. Oxford Press. 25s. 6d.
W. T. VAUGHAN. *Allergy*. Hutchinson. 10s. 6d.
ARTHUR WALEY. *Monkey*. Allen and Unwin. 12s. 6d.
H. G. WELLS. *Phoenix*. Secker and Warburg. 8s.
REBECCA WEST. *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon*. Macmillan. 42s.
J. A. WILLIAMSON. *The Ocean in English History*. Oxford Press. 10s.
EDMUND WILSON. *The Wound and the Bow*. Secker and Warburg. 15s.
FORREST WILSON. *Crusader in Crinoline*. Hutchinson. 18s.
VIRGINIA WOOLF. *The Death of the Moth*. Hogarth Press. 9s.
MICHAEL ZOSHCHENKO. *The Wonderful Dog*. Methuen. 7s. 6d.

Week-end Competitions

No. 671

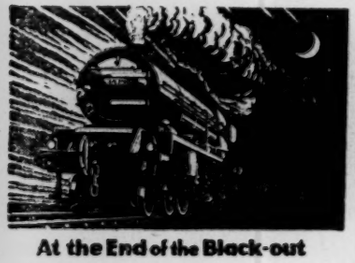
Set by Audrey Hilton

The usual prizes of two guineas and half a guinea are offered for the best new nursery rhyme. Variations or parodies of old ones not wanted. Limit 16 lines.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Gree Turnstile, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, December 21st.

2. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.



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RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 668

Set by F. C. C.

Competitors are invited to produce a letter of not more than 200 words describing a visit paid by some character in fiction to another character in a book by a different, but roughly contemporary, author.

Report by F. C. C.

This competition produced, on the whole, entertaining conceptions somewhat disappointingly executed. Sentimental Tommy visits Miss Zuleika Dobson; Mr. Micawber, the Chevalier Dupin; Alice goes with the Duchess to see the Dong. Cadet Grant sends a letter from Dean Farrar's Eric to Tom Brown, who, we are pleased to hear, exhibited "the vacuity of an ill-conditioned mind." Mr. I. Drazin describes Babbitt's visit to Soames Forsyte, "a gentleman go-getter, if you get me." "Antimacassar" has an account by Mrs. Gibson (*Wives and Daughters*) of a visit from the Rochesters. Mrs. R. was "an insignificant little thing, with no complexion and hair screwed up tight." R. H. sends Mary Musgrove's letter after staying with the Teazles (there is surely too great a time-lag here): "I became closely acquainted with Mrs. Candour, a most charming woman. She admired my new purple pelisse and said how becoming it was to my complexion." J. W. F. Hurford gave (along with another excellent entry) an ingenious description of Portia rescuing Faustus because he had not legally signed away his body as well as his soul. But, as I read Marlowe, there was only one document which Faustus signed and delivered giving both body and soul to Lucifer. "Gingertop's" good, if illegible, letter from Lord Sparkenbrooke to Rhett Butler is an excellent runner-up: "Am still busy with my epic poem, *The Holy Sardine of Lucca*." Mrs. Sewell's entry, in which Miss Thriplow describes her meeting with Scripps O'Neill, is so skilful that it might almost be a quotation from Aldous Huxley; but it has not that little more and how much it is that melts the reader's heart with irresistible delight. For having achieved this, I give the first prize (25s.) unhesitatingly to E. Lewis. Gordon Simpson's inventive and spirited Sam Weller is a good second (15s.). Ronald Mason and Arthur Marshall sent two excellent thirds (6s. 3d. each). Arthur Marshall should, strictly speaking, be disqualified for omitting the names of his authors, but I think it is clear that Mr. Somerset Maugham's Sadie Thompson has been staying with Mrs. Miniver.

FIRST PRIZE.

Cher Monsieur de Charlus,

Quoi-ho! Excusez mon grammaire. La vieille Alma Mere negligée les languages terriblement. Mais comme vous insistez que je devais m'improver et essayer d'etre plus serieux, je suis determiné de vous ecriver en francais. Ou au moins c'est Jeeves (mon homme, vous savez, qui vous avez remarqué) qui est determiné. Il m'a preté son dictionnaire.

J'espére que votre cousine m'a pardonné de pas avoir allé a sa matinée. Bobby St. Loop m'empecha parcequ'il voulut m'introduire a son maitresse—(un peu bas bleu mais quelle miel!). Je pense que vraiment c'était plus dans mon ligne que le matinée de la Princess. Toutes vos cousines sont un peu comme mes Tantes.

Jeeves fut ennuyé parceque j'echappái du Chateau de Guermantes par le Lait Train apres seulement deux jours, mais c'etait trop comme chéz ma Tante Agatha.

Disez "Boue dans votre oeil" pour moi a Bobby—le bon vieu oeuf! J'espere qu'il viendra a Londres avec vous. Vous trouverez que le Drones est trés comme le Jockey. Les Londres police sont un peu plus raisonnable et sensible que votre en Paris (quoique j'ai captivé plusieurs de leurs bonnets!) et je suis sur que vous les penserez "merveilleux," quoi!

Votre sincérement,
Bertie. (E. LEWIS)

SECOND PRIZE

SAM WELLER DESCRIBES TO MARY, PICKWICK'S VISIT TO MISS JENKYNS.

The Angel Cranford. Lovely creetur. I rite as promised. We came here yesterday to see Mr. Pickwicks old frend Captain Brown and we went to a swarry on Miss Jinkins invite. Me to help her pretty maid waitin. Not pretty like you Mary my dear.

I heerd the Captain intrerjuice Mr. Pickwick. Miss Jinkins drord herself up werry stiff and frosty but when the Captain said He's *Docter Johnsons* Godson she wos all smiles and long words not onderstanderble like parson. She axed him if he plaid cards. Says he Badly I fear for when I plaid at Bath against Lady Stuffemup and Mrs Wugsby, my partner Miss Bellow went home in tiers.

Lady Stuffemups title put the party all of a flutter and Miss Jinkins growd werry sweet and wowed she would be his partner all evening. Thinks I Yes Mum and for life too if you could. Master too was remembring Mrs Bardell and was swettin.

So we left early and artervords he larft and said Vunce bit twice shy which was just wot the Captain had vispered when I offered him more of Miss Jinkins wine.*

Pity all women aint like you Mary.

Your lovin Sam.

* "When a good deal [of wine] had been left at the last party . . . it was added to some of a fresh bottle brought up from the cellar . . .—Cranford, Chapter III. (GORDON SIMPSON)

THIRD PRIZE.

TRISTRAM SHANDY WRITES TO YORICK.

—To Master Yorick,

I am to tell of a strange happening.—

—That were a devil of a knock at the door, cries my Uncle *Toby*,—Please your honour I'll open it, says *Trim*.

—When lo! in comes me a blushing young lady —Your servant, says *Trim*, taken aback.

—My Uncle *Toby*, his crutch at the fender, his hand upon the armchair cover,—

—My dear, says he.

My name, sir, says she, is Pamela Andrews, and my master Lord B—— is after my ——. —We can skip that if you please, says my uncle.

—I stopped, says she, to beg pen and ink, for to write my good parents—For they'll have had, says she, but thirty-two letters since yesterday—they'll be fearing for my ——. Very well, my dear, says my Uncle *Toby*.

—But alas, my dear, he says—never a pen nor ink have we in the house!—and for paper, that is put by—

—For other uses, said *Trim*.

Then——

God help my poor parents! she cries, and is gone as swift as she came.

'Tis a pity, said my Uncle *Toby*. Were I younger, *Trim*, 'twere not for a pen I would be asked.

Ask me no more—— Tristram.

(RONALD MASON)

Dearest Lil, Maida Vale, W.9

Hope this finds you O.K. as it leaves me sitting pretty meantime. Well honey, I followed your advice and after he'd mailed the passage money it looked like he meant business but Godormighty what a journey. Still, there he was on the quay, courtly as you please and mind-the-step and lar-de-dar and up we come to this burg. The old white chapeau had gotten itself kinda squashed but I cheered it up with some felt geraniums and the new diamantay buttons really make my boots look a picture.

He keeps saying that he's sick of dames who act classy and that he'd read all about me (imagine!) and that he thinks I'm sorta cute. He says his wife doesn't understand him! Fancy that now, ain't he a card?

The servants are a stuck-up bunch and the gramophone only plays C Minors but the drink's straight stuff and anyways it all makes a change.

Wonderful weather, not a drop of rain.

Love,
Sadie Thompson.

P.S.—Had to beat it to the above pretty quick this morning as Clem's wife is flitting town.

(ARTHUR MARSHALL)

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